**Requirements for Family Reunification**

**Germany**

# 1. Background

## Scope and structure

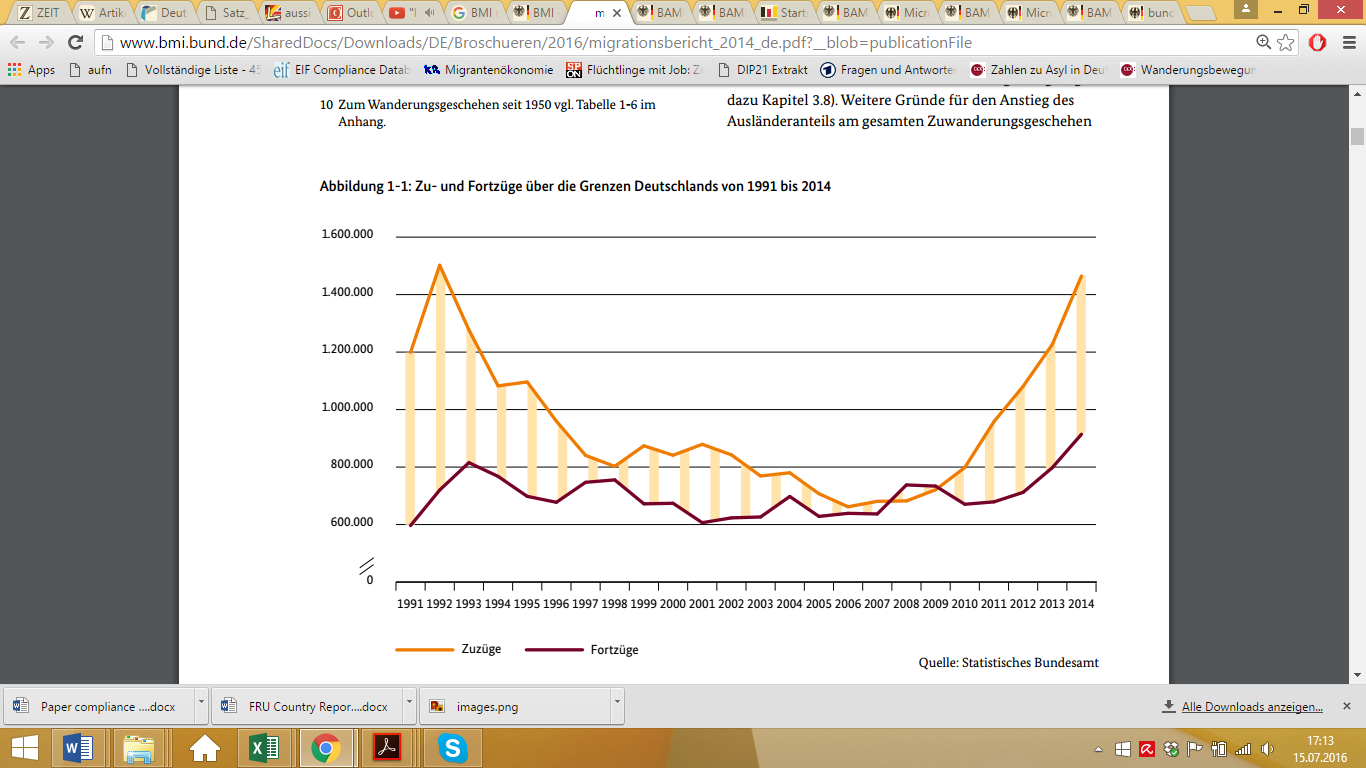
### General migration to Germany

The structure of Germany’s immigration population has its origins in the 1960-1970s when the policy of guest workers increased the population of foreigners in West Germany from 1.3% to 11.9% (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). The origins of the early guest workers were mainly Italian, Spanish and Greek. In the 1970s the percentage of Turkish guest workers increased to 23% of migrants (ibid). Originally, the idea was that the guest workers would rotate back to their home country. However, a majority stayed permanently in Germany. The recruitment of foreign workers stopped in the 1970s in response to the oil crisis (BpB 2015). However, due to family migration the percentage of foreigners who joined the guest workers still grew.

The end of the Cold War led to an increase in resettlement migrants (*Aussiedler*). For this group of migrants, Germany had established favourable laws in the 1950s. Additionally, in the 1980s migration due to humanitarian grounds as a response to the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia became a new major source of immigration to Germany, reaching its peak in 1992 with 444,000 applications for humanitarian immigration (Triebl & Klindworth 2012, p 24). After this peak, the revision of German asylum laws lead in 1993 to a decrease in the numbers of asylum seekers (*Asylkompromiss* and change of Art 16 of the Basic Law) (BpB 2015, p 7).

Since then, the number of new immigrants declined continuously over several years. In the years 2008 and 2009, for the first time more people left Germany than entered the country (BpB 2015) (see also figure 1). The numbers of immigrants finally rose again from 2010 onwards. This increase is strongly connected to an increase in asylum applications. At the end of 2015, 9.1 Million foreigners had been registered in the German Foreigners Registry which is ca. 11.18% of the general population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016). This includes all residence with a foreign passport, including EU citizens and third country nationals. Around 4.01 Million of those foreigners are EU citizens.

**Figure 1: Immigration and Emigration in Germany since 1991**



Orange: Immigration, Purple: emigration Source: BAMF (2014, p. 13)

According to the German Census Bureau (Statistisches Bundesamt 2016b, p. 10ff), the largest population of foreigners generally in Germany is the Turkish community with 1,506,113 immigrants. This group is followed by Poles (740,962) and Italians (596,127). The next largest group is Serbians (including Montenegro and Kosovo) (468,825), Romanians (452,718), Syrians (366,556), Greeks (339,931), Croats (297,895), Russians (230,994), Bulgarians (226,926), Austrians (181,756), Hungarians (178 221), Bosnia Herzegovinians (167,975), Spanish (155,918), Dutch (147,322) and Iraqi (136,399).

#### General Migration in 2015

The numbers presented above do not yet include the influx of migration of 2015. According to the German Census Bureau, 2.1 million people migrated in 2015 to Germany. However, around one Million of these immigrants already left the country in the same year (Medien Dienste Integration 2016). This still leads to a net increase of 1.1 million people within one year and constitutes the highest influx of migration since the foundation of the Federal Republic (ibid). Of the 2.1 million, ca 2 million had a foreign passport, the others were German nationals.

The majority of the newcomers in 2015 were Europeans (Medien Dienste Integration, 2015) (58%, and 45% of them from the EU). 30% came from Asia and 5% from Africa. After deducting the number of migrants who left Germany within 2015, 47% came from Asian countries, 38% from a European country. According to the preliminary numbers of the Census Bureau (Statistisches Bundesamt 2016a) the largest group of newcomers in 2015 came from:

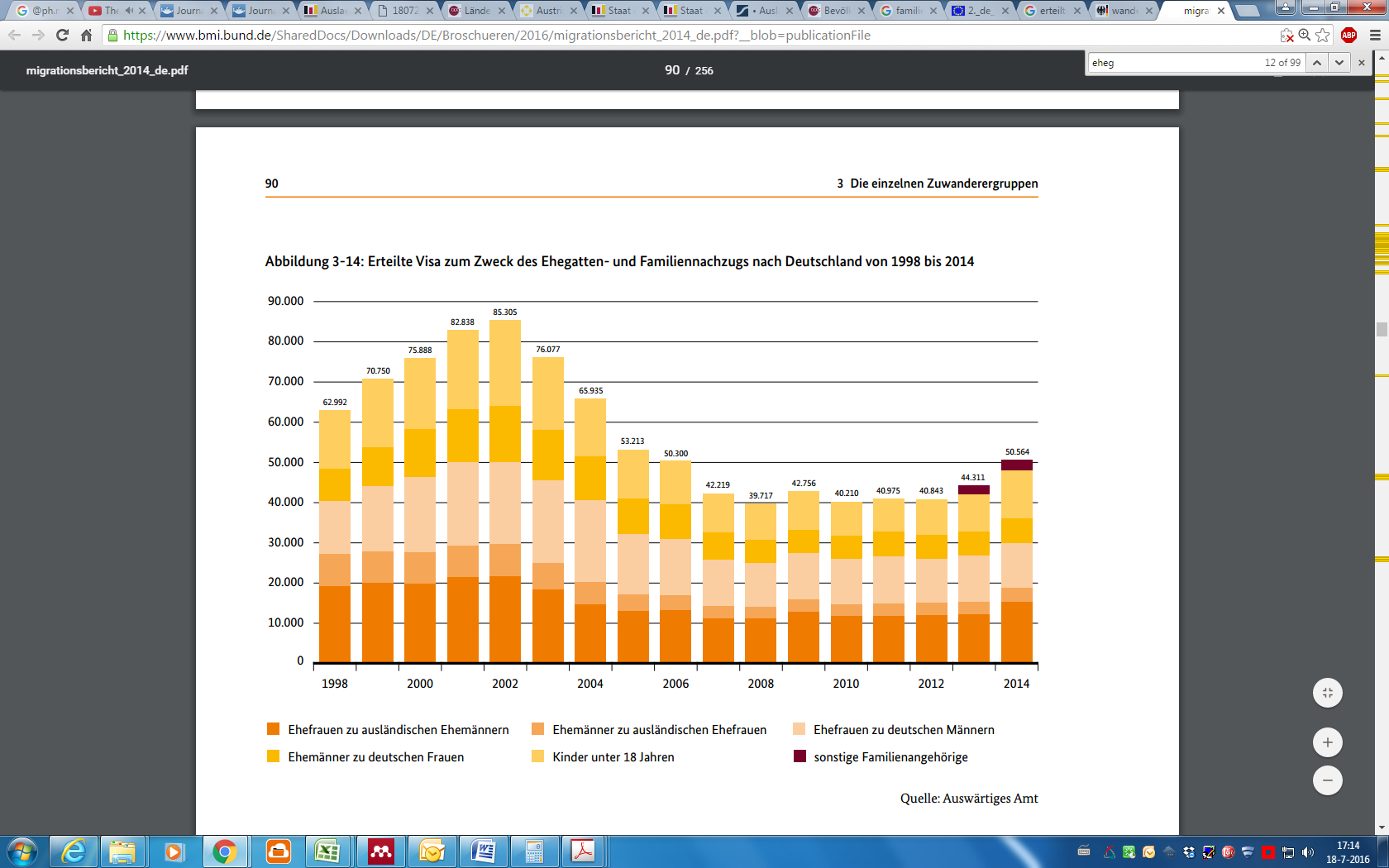
* Syria with ca 326,872 immigrants (emigration ca 11,216)
* Romania with ca 213,037 immigrants (emigration ca 126,763)
* Poland with ca 195,666 immigrants (emigration: ca 132,387)
* Afghanistan with ca 94,902 immigrants (emigrants: ca 5,309)
* Bulgaria with ca 83,579 immigrants (emigrants ca 45,729)

The numbers are still preliminary and are collected from the local administrations. The numbers do not provide information on the exact residence statistics of the newcomers.

### Family migration

Family migration remains one of the most important reasons for immigration to Germany. Of all third country nationals who migrated to Germany in the first nine months of 2015, 8.3% had family related reasons (BAMF, 2015, p. 9). This marks a decrease in family migration compared to 2014 when the proportion in the first nine months was 12.4%. However, the absolute numbers were higher in 2015, due to a general increase of migration. The scope of family migration to Germany can be seen on the visa statistics of the Federal Foreign Office. The statistic provide an overview of all visas that have been granted and are examine in the yearly migration report of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt fur Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF). The visa for family migration is provided by the foreign representations in co-operation with the local foreign registration offices in the municipality of the sponsor of family migration.

**Figure 2: Visas for the purpose of family migration from 1998-2014**



Source: BAMF (2014, p. 90)

Figure 2 provides the number of visas provided for the purpose of family migration from 1998 to 2014. The figure shows that there was a peak in 2002 in the number of visas for family migration. After this peak, the numbers declined (in 2014 there were 43.8% less visa issued for family migration than in 2002). From 2007 to 2013, the numbers remained relatively constant. In 2014 the numbers of visas provided for family migration increased again[[1]](#footnote-1) (BAMF 2014, p. 89). In the first half year of 2015 around 30.000 visas were distributed pointing to a further increase in family related migration (Spiegel, 2015). According to the BAMF (2014, p. 90) the increase relates particularly to increasing immigration due to work related and humanitarian reasons. This type of migration is mainly driven by men, leading to an increase of women joining their husbands. Highly skilled migrants more often enter Germany directly with their families.

On the structure of the visas that are issued, the data shows that between 2000 and 2013 the largest group of family migration visas were issued for spouses to reunite with their German partner (BAMF 2014). Between 2003 and 2007 the reunification of wives with their German husbands was the dominant type of family migration. Parallel to overall family migration, visa numbers to spouses of German citizens rose from 1998 until 2002. From 2002 to 2011 the numbers decreased and have remained relatively constant since then.

The visa statistics on third country family reunification do not differentiate between regular third country family reunification and reunification with an internationally protected migrant. Generally, it can be observed that in 2014, family migration to foreign spouses was a larger group than to German spouses (BAMF, 2014, p. 90). In 2014 the largest group of family migration was the same as in previous years, the migration of wives to their foreign husbands (30.3%) (ibid). The portion of children who joined their parents remained relatively constant at 20-25% since 1998.

Upon closer examination into the origins of family members who come to Germany, we see that over the last years Turkey has been the country where most visas for family migration were issued (for details see figure 1-4 in the appendix). While the overall number of issued visas in Turkey decreased over the last years, it rose again in 2014. Regarding the refugee crisis, it is important to note that the visa statistics do not show the nationality of the applicant, but only the country of the foreign representation where the visa is issued. For more information on the distribution of family migration visas according to countries of origin and type of family migration see figure 1-4 in the appendix.

Overall, it has to be noted that the data derived from the visa statistics excludes several categories of family migration. For example, there are several nationalities who do not need a visa to join their family members in Germany, such as citizens from Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand, the USA, Andorra, Brazil, El Salvador, Honduras, Monaco and San Marino (BAMF 2014, p. 89). Additionally, nationals of EU member states do not require a visa as well as nationals of member states of the European Economic Area (e.g. Switzerland). Thus with the EU’s Eastern enlargements a large part of foreigners no longer required a visa to join their family members in Germany which may account for a part of the declining numbers. Moreover, there are exceptional cases in which a residence permit for family reunification can be provided by the local foreign registry office without the involvement of the foreign representations and a provision of a visa. This is the case if a foreigner with a different residence status already lives in Germany and his/her status changes, for example through a marriage in Germany. Thus, these cases of family migration are not included in the statistics of the Federal Foreign Office.

An alternative source of data is provided by the Central Register of Foreigners (*Ausländerzentralregister,* AZR). The register includes data since 2005 and shows the residence permits that are issued by the local authorities for the purpose of family reunification (BAMF 2014). It also includes family migration beyond the nuclear family but does not differentiate between third country family migration and migration to a German family member. Due to the different criteria of data collection, the number of residence permits for the purpose of family reunification is higher than the numbers from the visa statistics (e.g. in 2014, 63,677 residence permits for family reunification and 50,564 visas for the purpose of family migration were issued) (BAMF 2014, p. 94). Generally, there was an increase of residence permits from 2013 to 2014 by 13.6%.

According to the Census Bureau (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015), 644,931 migrants held a residence status for family reasons on the 31st of December 2015. Contrary to the visa statistics, the AZR includes the citizenship of the family members. The data show that in 2014, 11.5% of residence permits for family migration were issued to Turkish citizens (BAMF 2014, p. 95). The numbers of family migration with Turkish nationals increased compared to previous years by around 5% while it decreased from 2010 to 2013. Beyond Turkish family members, residence permits for family migration were most commonly granted to citizens of Russia (6.7%), India (6.3%), Kosovo (5.9%), USA (4.8%) and Syria (4.8%).

## 1.2 Changes in legislation

General migration legislation:

The different types of immigrants who came to Germany over the last decades, lead to different migration laws and their revisions. For long Germany did not see itself as a migration country (BpB 2015). This gradually changed, due to economic and demographic developments that are particularly related to the decreasing German population. In order to balance the aging German population and the lack of young people, Germany recognized the potential of migration to maintain the existing standard of living (BpB 2011). This meant that over the last years a central aim of migration law was to facilitate immigration of highly qualified migrants and to attract young and qualified migrants to Germany. Additionally, from 2001 the Law of Citizenship was revised to facilitate naturalization. From 2001 onwards with the so-called Süssmuth Commission, the call emerged to move migration law from a public safety and order aspect towards the organization of migration and integration. In 2005, after several years of political debate, the Residence Act (Zwanderungsgesetz) replaced the Aliens law of 1990 and the Free Movement Act/EU. Since then, integration of migrants became a central issue. Also the facilitation of highly qualified migrants continued to be a central issue. Overall, the principle of “*fordern und fördern*” (demanding/challenging and supporting) migrants became a central aspect of German migration polices and laws. That principle entailed that conditions for those who integrate and who have a prospect to receive a (permanent) residence status became increasingly favourable. Those with little chances of a secure residence status and those who do not fulfil integration conditions are confronted with harsher laws and easier deportation. Finally, the position of the so-called *Geduldete*[[2]](#footnote-2) (persons with exceptional permission to remain for humanitarian reasons) improved.

Since the start of the refugee crisis the emphasis of new policies is especially on integration of the mostly young asylum seekers to Germany to qualify them for the German labour market. Before summarizing the main changes of German family migration law, the table below summarizes the main changes of general German migration law since 2005.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Name | Aim | Content | Enforced |
| 2005 | Zuwanderungsgesetz | To facilitate migration for the purpose of employment  To regulate and limit influx of migrants  To improve integration of immigrants with more permanent status  To tighten the asylum procedure[[3]](#footnote-3). | Package law reordered the previous migration law completely new.  Art 1 includes the Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz, AufenthG).  **Residence status:** New structuring and reduction of residence status, dependent on the reason for migration (education, employment, humanitarian reasons, family reunification).  **Family migration:** regulated in line with Art 6 of the basic law in section 27-36 of the Residence Act. Main changes were more tolerant terms of family, access to the labour market, integration measures for all TCN family members after admission, introduction of age limits, duration of marriage for independent residence permit reduced from 4 to 2 years (For more details see chapters below and Triebl & Klindworth 2012).  **Permanent residence:** connected to relatively high conditions but offers better protection against expulsion and almost non restricted access to the labour market. The status is not bound to the purpose of residence. Highly skills migrants, self-employed and migrants eligible for asylum (and their family members) have a faster and facilitated access to permanent residence.  **Integration:** for the first time integration measures were included in the German law, both as an offer but also as a condition. As a general principal, migrants have to contribute to the costs of the integration courses. The conceptualization and central coordination of the courses is done by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). The operation of the courses is decentralized and arranged by different supporting organizations.  **Humanitarian aspects:** improvement of the status of subsidiary protected migrants, refugee status is extended beyond the definition of the Geneva Convention to victims of non-state prosecution and gender specific prosecution in line with the EU Qualification Directive. Additionally, some improvements for so-called *Geduldete* were introduces.  **Additional changes:** establishment of hardship commissions at the state level, stricter laws for the prevention of terrorism and criminal smuggling | 01.01.2005 |
| 2007 | Erstes Richtlinienumsetzungsgesetz (First Law to transpose EU Directives) | To transpose 11 EU migration directives  (Including family reunification directive).  To modify 2005 law regarding the right to stay, integration, citizenship and family reunification[[4]](#footnote-4) | **EU citizens:** Establishment of additional permanent residence status ’permanent residence ECs’, adjustment of the rules for permanent residence for EU citizens and their family members, establishment of a special residence status for researchers and EU students  **Victims of human trafficking:** temporary residence status for the contribution in criminal proceedings.  **Integration**: Strengthening of the obligation to integrate through obligation of integration courses.  **Geduldete:** improved access to the labour market to specific groups  **Transposition** of several EU asylum directives: material conditions for protection, rights connected to a protected status, asylum procedures and reception conditions.  **Immigration of investors:** facilitation of migrate for foreigners who invest into Germany by creating new jobs  **Family migration:**   * + integration requirements, preadmission language tests   + income requirement for German citizens extended to exceptional cases   + forced marriage exemption clause   + marriage of convenience exemption clause   + age limit for sponsor and spouse 18 (for TCNs, Refugees, Germans) | **2007** |
| 2008: | Arbeitsmigrationssteuerungsgesetz (Law for the regulation of labour migration) | To regulate access to the labour market of highly qualified migrants[[5]](#footnote-5). | **Highly qualified migrants:** limiting of the income barrier for direct permanent residence permits, better conditions for academics and their families  **Geduldete:** secure residence status for those who finished professional training in Germany and who have a binding job offer or who have worked for three years in a job that requires a professional training  **Foreign investors:** further limiting the amount of investment for foreigners to receive a residence permit.  **Seasonal labour:** extensions of employment time | 01.01.2009 |
| 2011 | Gesetz gegen Zwangsehen (Law to fight forced Marriages) | To fight forced marriages[[6]](#footnote-6) | **Family reunification:** Independent right of residence increased from 2 to 3 years  Extended return possibilities for victims of forced marriages  **Permanent residence**: permit only after successful participation of integration course | 01.07.2011 |
| 2011 | Gesetz zur Errichtung einer Visa-Warndatei (Law to establish a Visa warning system) | To introduce a visa warning system (restricting human trafficking, preventing irregular migration, improving internal security)[[7]](#footnote-7) | Establishing a visa warning system | 01.06.2013 |
| 2011 | Zweites Richtlinienumsetzungsgesetz (Second Law to transpose EU Directives) | To transpose EU Returns Directive and EU Employers Sanction Directive, and other national changes[[8]](#footnote-8) | **Return**: Regulation of return decisions, detention, the return of unaccompanied minors (for details see Basse et al 2011)  **Sanctions for employers**: who hire illegal migrants  Adjustments of the EU visa codex  Additional changes see Basse et al (2011) | 26.11.2011 |
| 2012 | Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Hochqualifizierten-Richtlinie der Europäischen Union (Law to transpose EU Blue Card Directive) | To transpose the Blue Card directive[[9]](#footnote-9) | Regulations for highly skilled migrants, also provides facilitated entry for their family members | 01.08.2012 |
| 2013 | Änderung FreizügG/EU 2013 (Law to change the EU Freemovement law) | To adjust German law to EU citizen law[[10]](#footnote-10) | Several adjustments of migration of EU citizens with some implications for their family members | 29.01.2013 |
| 2013 | Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2011/95/EU (law to transpose the EU qualification Directive) | To transpose EU Qualification Directive[[11]](#footnote-11) | **Subsidiary protection:** status falls under asylum law, similar rights and obligations as under asylum procedures (E.g. same rights as refugees under the Geneva Convention for none-married spouses, parents of minors to reunite with the subsidiary protected migrant), family reunification is still matter of discretion no right and income requirement is not necessarily waived, permanent residence status after 7 years  **Asylum seekers:** access to the labour market after nine months possible  **Dublin-II**: one week period before deportation | 01.12.2013 |
| 2014 | Neufassung des Asylverfahrensgesetzes (Revision of the Asylum procedures law) | To extend list of safe countries  To facilitate access to the labour market[[12]](#footnote-12) | **Safe countries:** Bosnia, Herzegovina and Serbia  **Access to labour market:** possible after three months for asylum seekers and *Geduldete* |  |
|  | Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Rechtsstellung von asylsuchenden und geduldeten Ausländern (law for the improvement of the position of asylum seekers and tolerated) | To improve position of asylum seekers and tolerated migrants[[13]](#footnote-13) | **Asylum seekers:** relaxation of restriction of free movement *(Residenzpflicht)*, abolishing priority of benefits in kind | 01.01.2015 |
|  | Gesetz zur Änderung des Asylbewerberleistungsgesetzes und des Sozialgerichtsgesetzes (law to change the asylum seekers benefit law) | To adjust the benefits to a Constitutional Court ruling[[14]](#footnote-14) | **Asylum seekers:** adjustment of benefits | 01.03.2015 |
| 2015 | Gesetz zur Neubestimmung des Bleiberechts und der Aufenthaltsbeendigung (Law for Right to Stay and ending residency) | To improve positions of foreign investors  To facilitate ending of residence for those without chance of secure residence[[15]](#footnote-15) | **Geduldete:** can receive residence status through persistent integration efforts  **Subsidiary protected:** get equal right to family reunification as asylum seekers.  **Victims of human trafficking:** Enhanced rights of residence  **Expulsion:** new regulation of the procedure and reasons for detention | 01.08.2015 |
| 2015 | Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Unterbringung, Versorgung und Betreuung ausländischer Kinder und Jugendlicher (law for the improvement of reception and care of foreign children) | To improve the care and reception of unaccompanied foreign minors  To relive local youth services[[16]](#footnote-16) | Country wide distribution system of unaccompanied minors, increase of the age of minority from 16 to 18 for asylum procedural aspects, conditions for youth support, statistical data exchange | 01.11.2015 |
| 2015 | Asylpaket I: Asylverfahrensbeschleunigungsgesetz (First Asylum package) | To speed up asylum procedure as a response to the refugee crisis in 2015[[17]](#footnote-17) | **Reception conditions:** new financial distributions between the states and the federal level to cover the cost of asylum, in initial receptions centres, benefits in kind are given again priority over monetary benefits, asylum seekers from Western Balkan stay in specific initial reception centres, new initial reception centres, facilitation of administrative procedures for health care of asylum seekers  **Integration measures**: available for asylum seekers with good chances to stay and access to the labour market  **Adjusted Deportation practises**  **Safe countries**: Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro | 25.10.2015 |
| 2016 | Asylpaket IIGesetzes zur Einführung beschleunigter Asylverfahren (Second Asylum package) | To speed up asylum procedures[[18]](#footnote-18) | **Asylum reception**: five special centres for applicants with low asylum chances (who do not cooperate and safe countries).  **Family reunification:** for migrants with subsidiary protection status is stopped for two years (special hardship exceptions exist) for more detail see subsequent chapters.  **Asylum seekers:** in vocational training receive secure residence for the time and subsequently two years to work, reduction of material benefits of asylum seekers by 10 euro per month as contribution for integration courses.  **Deportation**: of sick asylum seekers is facilitated, only serious illnesses count as reasons to prevent deportation | 17.03.2016 |
| 2016 | Gesetz zur erleichterten Ausweisung von straffälligen Ausländern und zum erweiterten Ausschluss der Flüchtlingsanerkennung bei straffälligen Asylbewerbern (law to facilitate expulsion of criminal foreigners and withdrawing of refugee status) | To facilitate expulsion of criminal foreigners and withdrawing of refugees status (reaction to the events of the New Year’s night 2015?2016 in Cologne)[[19]](#footnote-19) | Lowering of the criminal elements of crime for expulsion and withdrawing of refugee status | 17.03.2016 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

### Family reunification legislation

Over the last years, the main goals for family migration policies were similar to general migration. The principle of “*fordern und fördern*” can be observed throughout the legislation. That includes that a central goal is that family members integrate quickly and obtain access to the labour market. The migration of highly skilled migrants and their family members is favoured. Examining the laws of the last years, five partly interconnected, trends can be observed:

1. **Access to labour market** of family members was facilitated.
2. **Integration measures** are strengthened, including a pre-entry language certificate and post-entry integration courses. With regard to the pre-entry tests, the initially very restrictive character was again softened through several court rulings over the last years and a hardship clause that was introduced.
3. Facilitation of family migration for **highly skilled migrants**. For example this group does not have to pass the pre-entry language test.
4. Emphasis on the prevention of **forced and fake marriages** lead to several policies, such as a general age limit for spouses and sponsors, permanent residencepermits are only provided after successful participation in an integration course, duration of the marriage for independent residence permits was modified several times, a forced marriage exemption clause was included in the law and a marriage of convenience exemption clause exists.
5. **Humanitarian family reunification** experienced mixed trends. Conditions for accepted refugees and migrants eligible for asylum did not change much in the last years. However, subsidiary protected migrants were subject to a mixed trend. On the one hand they got equal right to family reunification as accepted refugees in 2015. On the other hand, in 2016 their right for family reunification was fully stopped for two years (with the exception of a hardship clause). For more detail on these aspects see chapters below.

## 1.3 Draft laws / bills (those being prepared)

During the research for this report the so-called *Integrationsgesetz* (Integration law) was drafted and accepted by the German Bundestag (German Parliament, lower chamber) and Bundesrat (Federal Council, upper chamber) in July 2016 (Bundesamt fur Arbeit und Soziales, 2016). The main contents of this law are the following. First, with regard to access to the labour market 100,000 new state supported jobs opportunities shall be created for asylum seekers. The jobs shall be already available for those who did not yet receive a definite decision on their asylum application and constitute no full labour contracts. Instead, the jobs shall benefit the general public or include jobs within the reception centres. Asylum seekers from safe countries of origin are exempted from these opportunities. The idea is that with these job opportunities, asylum seekers make a first step to enter the German labour market and to integrate (Bundesamt fur Arbeit und Soziales, 2016). Critics argue that such subsidized jobs normally only lead to a reduction of regular jobs and even prevent the unemployed from finding access to the first labour market (Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR), quoted in Die Zeit, 2016).

Secondly, the new law abolishes on a trial basis of three years the so-called *Vorangsrecht* (priority check) on the labour market. The priority checks advantage German and EU citizens on the labour market over asylum seekers and *Geduldete* (tolerated, see page 6). However, to take the regional labour market into account, the Bundesänder (federal states) can decide in which regions these new rules apply. The new rules shall allow asylum seekers to take up jobs in temporary employments after three months into the asylum procedures (Bundesamt fur Arbeit und Soziales, 2016).

Moreover, the new law grants *Geduldete* and asylum seekers access to (vocational) education. For the time of schooling and education, a secure residence status is granted (for three years). This status is extended for two more years if the migrant finds a job after his or her educations in his or her field. A six month period between education and employment is granted to allow for the job search. The age limit of 21 for access to the labour market is abolished.

Next, the new law extends the options and obligations for integration courses. Besides language skills, the courses shall pay also more attention to German values. This aspect was a reaction to the events of the New Year’s night 2015/2016 in Cologne. The option to participate in a course is valid for one year. Waiting periods for integration courses are reduced to six weeks. The law aims for more transparency regarding available courses and free spots on them. Additionally, integration courses become obligatory for asylum seekers. If an asylum seeker continuously refrains from taking an integration course, without justifiable reasons or fails to provide necessary documents, benefits can be shortened (also asylum seekers with basic German knowledge can be required to take an integration course).

Also those migrants who aim for a permanent residence permit, including refugees who want a permanent residence status, will be required to integrate in a step by step procedure. Efforts in learning the language and in finding a job are rewarded and can lead to a permanent residence status of a refugee already after three years (language level C1 and being able to mainly support him/herself financially). Those who do not meet this requirement can receive permanent residence after five years if, beyond other criteria, they can prove A2 German language level and when they can sustain themselves. A hardship clause exists for exceptional cases to waive the requirement.

Critics argue that the problem is normally not that asylum seekers are not willing to integrate but that there is a lack of places on integration courses (e.g. The BAMF reported a lack of 200,000 places in integration courses for example due to a lack of teachers, quoted in Die Zeit 2016, see also Ausschussdrucksache 18(11)681). Several migration related NGOs argued in a so-called *Brandbrief* to the Ministry that that the obligation to integrate promotes the image of the integration unwilling asylum seekers, which does not reflect the reality. This could increase resentments in the German population towards asylum seekers (Brandbrief 2016, see also Ausschussdrucksache 18(11)681). The reductions of benefits for asylum seekers as a sanction for not taking part in integration measures and for not taking up job opportunities is also pointed out to be questionable regarding EU law (particularly the EU Reception Directive). The letter also criticizes that the conditions for the permanent residence status are too high and fail to take into account the specific challenges of asylum seekers, and leave them for many years in an insecure residence status which prevents integration. It was also pointed out that the new rules of integration courses will lead to considerable new administrative costs for the supporting organisations who offer these courses at the local level (Paritätische Gesamtverband 2016).

Another critical aspect of the new law is the so-called residence duty. The law allows the federal states to restrict refugees to live in certain areas. Every refugee who follows higher or vocational training or who has a regular job (income of ca 712 Euro per month) is exempted from the residence duty. The residence restrictions aim to prevent ghetto building in bigger cities. However, critics argue that this obligation stands not only in conflict with international and EU law; it also prevents integration if migrants cannot rely on their social networks for finding jobs or when being traumatized. The new legislation is currently implemented by the municipalities. However, due to missing guidelines the municipalities and Lander deal with the new legislation in very diverse ways which sometimes leads to chaotic situations. Several refugees are asked to move, while they just started to settle down or the Bundesland where they lived during their asylum procedure is not prepared to receive them again. Several refugees plan to take judicial steps against the obligation to move back to the place where they stayed during the asylum procedure, after being recognized as refugee (see Refugee council NRW[[20]](#footnote-20))

Since many of these new laws are aimed at asylum seekers who do not yet have a right of family reunification, the *Integrationsgesetz* is likely to have little implication for family reunification. Only aspects that apply also to accepted refugees, such as integration courses, conditions for permanent residence and residence restrictions can implicitly also affect the family members of accepted refugees.

## 1.4 Discussion (possible future developments on legislation)

Already during the negotiation of the Asylpaket II the German government planned to declare Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia as safe countries. However, since this decision requires the agreement of the Bundesrat, it was decided to resolve this aspect separately (see Drucksache 18/8039). The law is still pending because the agreement of the Green party in the Bundesrat is required to approve this decision. So far, several representatives of the Green party in the Bundesrat indicated that they would block this law. The decision is now postponed to autumn 2016 (Spiegel 2016; Die Welt, 2016).

Moreover, according to several newspapers (Die Welt 2016, Focus 2016), the political parties of the coalition government work on position papers to further change the current asylum and migration laws. So far there is no agreement within the government coalition for an *Asylpaket III*. The positions are partly conflicting and suggest very diverse new policies. For example some representatives of the Social Democratic Party emphasise that future policies should not only be on limiting migration, but particularly on integration measures (Die Welt, 2016b). SPD representatives work on position papers that include a major investment of several million or even billion Euros to create new child day care opportunities, new positions for teachers and child care workers, as well as better support for language leaning, vocational training and job placement as a response to the refugee crisis. Additionally, new accommodations shall emerge in order to prevent competition between refugees and other people who look for affordable accommodation. However, particularly the federal states demand that the federal level takes up the high integration costs and there is not yet an agreement within the government coalition on such far reaching measures and investments. The Christian Democratic Party (CDU) lead by Angela Merkel favours a European solutions to manage the challenges presented by the influx of refugees and the Christian Social Union (CSU) favours further restrictions and an upper limit of asylum seekers for a given time frame. It remains unclear to what extent further reforms will be introduced before the elections in 2017.

# 2. Requirements allowed in Council Directive 2003/86/EC and how they are applied in Germany for beneficiaries of international protection

German law makes considerable distinctions regarding the conditions for family migration between different groups of foreigners who want to join their family in Germany. The distinction is made along the residence status of the sponsors in Germany (Kreibink & Rühl, 2007, p. 12). Sponsors who are EU citizens fall under EU law and have the most favourable rights. As will be discussed in the subsequent chapter, also family members of German sponsors enjoy less restrictive conditions for family reunification than family members of third country nationals. Within the group of third country national sponsors, several additional distinctions exist (e.g. Blue Card holders, citizens of countries with free visa regulations, long term residents, and migrants under international protection).

Taking a closer look at beneficiaries of international protection shows that German law makes a distinction between different categories of foreigners who benefit from international protection. Asylum seekers who are still in the asylum procedure and persons who received a negative decision on their asylum request, even if they cannot be deported, have generally no right to reunite with their family.

Migrants who are recognized refugees fall under the Family Reunification Directive of the EU and thus, benefit from beneficial conditions for family reunification (for details see below). Migrants who are only granted subsidiary protection are not included under the EU Directive. In the following, first the developments and effects of the new legislation regarding family reunification with regard to subsidiary protected migrants are discussed. Next, the conditions and effects of family reunification of accepted refugees under the Geneva Convention and migrants who are eligible for asylum are discussed in more detail.

## 2.1 Subsidiary protection

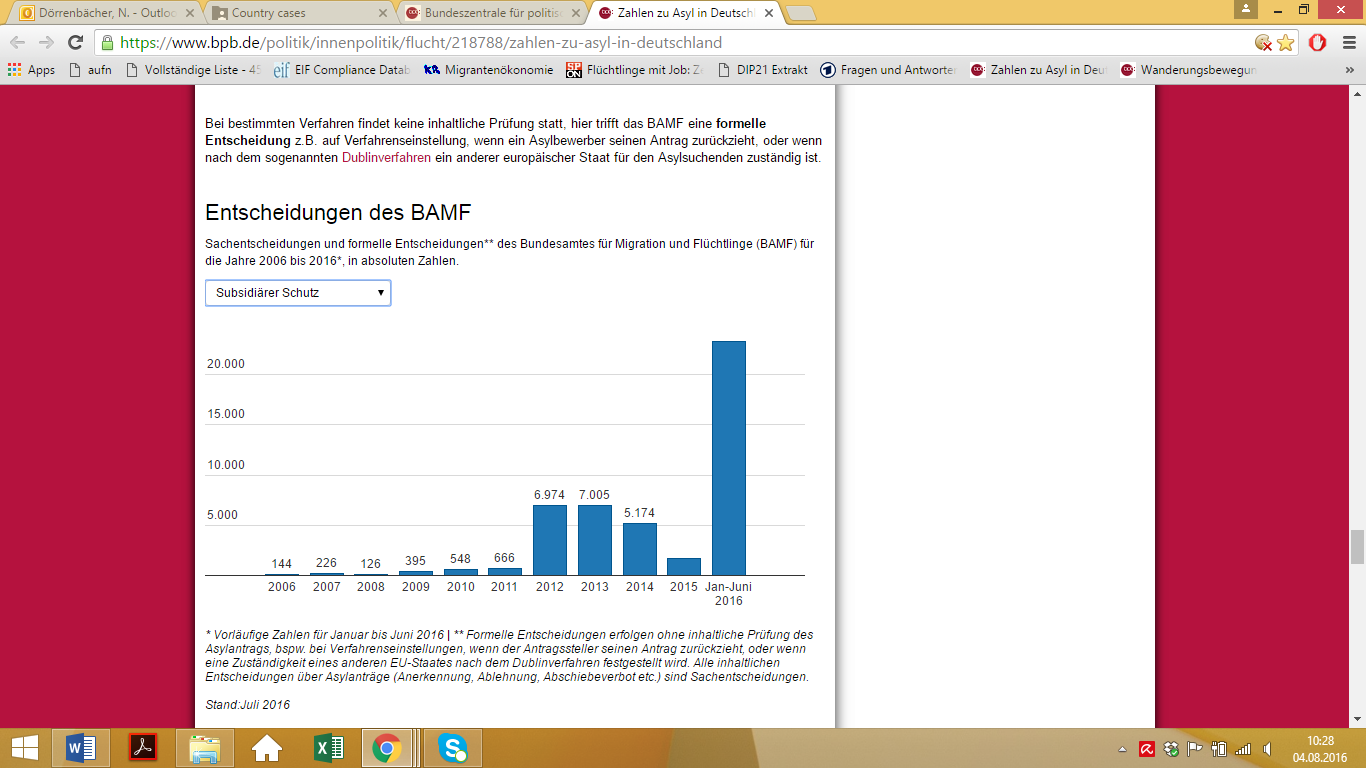
Until 2015, migrants with a subsidiary protection status had limited rights to reunite with their family and were largely dependent on the discretion of the foreign registration offices *(Ausländerbehörden*) (see *Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2011/95/EU*). The right to family migration for migrants under subsidiary protection was added into German law in 2015 with the *Gesetz zur Neubestimmung des Bleiberechts und der Aufenthaltsbeendigung*. With this law, subsidiary protected migrants obtained the same rights for family migration as recognized refugees and those who are entitled to asylum.

However, as a reaction to the refugee crisis in 2015, the rights of subsidiary protected migrants were again limited with the *Asylpaket II.* After considerable political debate, the law entered into force in the beginning of 2016 (see chapter 1). The new regulation suspends the right for family reunification of subsidiary protected migrants until **16.03.2018**. The establishment of this restriction was accompanied by considerable public debate. Even after adoption, there is debate if this regulation is in line with the German Basic Law (e.g. Grundgesetz Art 6 on the right to family life) and the right of a family life under European law (particular EU Directive 2011/95/EU Qualification directive, Art 23.1), the European Charter of Human Rights and international law such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Deutscher Anwalt Verein 2016, Bundestag Wissenschaftliche Dienste 2016). Particularly disputed was the fact that the suspending of family reunification also applies to unaccompanied minors. In case subsidiary protected minors reach adulthood before 16.03.2018, they no longer have possibilities to reunite with their parents (with exceptions under the hardship clause).

The effects of these new restrictions cannot fully be evaluated yet, as the new regulations have only existed for a few months. In 2015 only 0.6% of all asylum applicants obtained a status of subsidiary protection (Die Zeit, 2016 b). Thus, the law was considered to have only minor effects on the overall number of migrants who are restricted from bringing their families (Die Zeit, 2016 c, Spiegel online 2015 b).

Nevertheless, NGOs such as Pro Asyl have warned that the new law will change administrative decision making practices. Indeed, in the beginning of the year, the Ministry of Interior instructed the Migration Agency (Bundes Amt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, BAMF) to investigate Syrian asylum applications again on an individual level (Pro Asyl 2016 a). In April 2016 this lead to 16% of Syrian asylum seekers being granted only a subsidiary protection status (Pro Asyl 2016 b). Generally, the decision making statistics of the BAMF show that until June 2016, 8% of asylum seekers received only a subsidiary protection status (see also figure 3 below).

**Figure 3: number of asylum seekers with subsidiary protection status since 2006**



Source: BpB (2016)

A side effect of this new procedure is that, while it might delay family migration for two years, the status of subsidiary protection has to be renewed already after the first year. If Syrian asylum seekers are increasingly granted only subsidiary protection to prevent them from reuniting with their family, this comes with considerable additional administrative workload of investigating and renewing the subsidiary protected status after 12 months. Additionally, it prevents the subsidiary protected migrants from integrating and from planning their live in Germany beyond one year (Reuters, 2015, Diakonie Deutschland 2016).

Increasingly, Syrian migrants who only received a subsidiary protection status have started court proceedings. The courts seem to challenge the new decision-making practices of the BAMF[[21]](#footnote-21). For example, the administrative court in Dusseldorf decided in August 2016 that a Syrian asylum seeker is indeed likely to be politically prosecuted when he or she returned to Syria. As a result they shall not be granted a subsidiary protection status but a refugee status. It remains to be seen to what extent the court rulings will influence the BAMF’s decision making.

In the following, the rules for recognized refugees and migrants who are entitled to asylum are described. The rules apply in the same way to subsidiary protected migrants after 16.03.2018.

## 2.2 Stable and regular resources

Generally, German law demands that the sponsor of family reunification who wants to reunite with his or her third country family members has stable and regular resources that allow him or her to cover the expenses of the family without drawing on social benefits (Art 5.1.1 AufenthG). However, a foreigner who has a residence status according to Art 23.4, 25.1 or 2 AufenthG or a settlement permit according to Art 26.3 AufenthG (resettlement refugees, migrants entitled to asylum or recognized refugee under the Geneva Convention) can be exempted from the condition of sufficient resources. This derogation exists only as long as the conditions of Art 29.2 AufenthG are fulfilled. These conditions include that family reunification is not possible in a third country to which the family members have a relation. Additionally, the application for family reunification has to be submitted within three months of being recognized as refugee or entitlement for asylum.

Somewhat paradoxically, the three month-deadline also applies to subsidiary protected migrants who fall within the two year stop of family migration. The *Gesetz zur Einführung beschleunigter* Asylverfahren (see above) in Art 2.4 declares that the three-month deadline for applying for family migration starts for subsidiary protected on the 16.03.2018. Thus, while they are first prevented from reuniting with their family, they are after this period again encouraged to apply as fast as possible for the visa.

Generally, a visa for the purpose of family reunification has to be obtained from a foreign representation abroad by the family member. However, the visa does not have to be granted within the three month period to be exempted from the resource requirement. In order to keep within the three month deadline, the application can be made by the sponsor in Germany at the local *Ausländerbehörden* (foreign registration office) or the family member abroad at a German foreign representation. As a response to the refugee crisis in 2015, there is also the option for refugees from Syria to apply for family reunification online [[22]](#footnote-22).

If the application is submitted after the three month deadline, similar requirements as for regular third country family reunification can apply with regard to the income. However, in such a case, the local foreign registrations still have the discretion to waive the income conditions (Art 29.2 AufenthG). Following the standards set by the Red Cross (Rotes Kreuz 2008, p. 31) the discretion is exercised in such a way that internationally protected migrants are generally treated like family reunification to a German citizen and that family migration cannot be reasonably expected to be exercised in a state that poses the danger of prosecution. Parents of minor children are generally exempted from the income requirement regardless of the three month period (Art 36.1-2 AufenthG).

## 2.3 Compliance with integration measures

Third country nationals who reunite with a third country national are generally obligated to obtain, prior to their entry to Germany, a basic language certificate (A1) (introduction of this requirement in 2007 see chapter 1, Art 30.1.2 AufenthG). However, this obligation does not apply to recognized refugees and migrants who are eligible for asylum. The exceptions exists as long as the family relationship existed before the sponsor entered Germany (sec Art 30.1 sentence 3 no 1 AufenthG). The requirement can apply in the case of family formation. Children are exempted from the requirement (Art 32.1.no 1 AufenthG).

After arrival, all family members have to participate in an integration course. This entails that they obtain language skills and pass an orientation test. Failing to pass the tests influences the prolonging of the residence permits (Art 8.3 AufenthG) and can lead to reductions of benefits after enforcement of the new *Integrationsgesgetz*. Children up to the age of 16 are exempted from the requirement.

The cost of the integration courses are paid by the BAMF to the organizations who offer the courses[[23]](#footnote-23). 50% of the course costs have to be covered by the participants. That means one hour of integration course costs 1.95 euros (before July 2016, 1.55 euros). As a regular integration course consist of 660 hours, the total cost for the course is 1,287 euros. However, foreigners who rely on social benefits are exempted from the fee. They also receive assistance for commuting costs (BAMF 2016b). A course consist of up to 25 participants (20 participants are needed to make the courses financially beneficial for the organizations that offer the courses). Considering the effects of integration courses it is interesting to note that Schuller et al (2011) find in their panel survey that the benefits of the integration courses are particularly visible for participants with an asylum background, migrants who came to Germany for reasons of family reunification, migrants with a low educational background and those who have little contact to Germans in their regular living environment. The effects and the overall rather positive perceptions of participants regarding the integration courses are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

## 2.4 Staying period

The right to family reunification is not dependent on a two –year minimum duration of residence, neither for family reunification nor for family formation refugees.

## 2.5 Accommodation

The same regulations apply for accommodation as for the income condition (See section above). In other words, the accommodation requirement does not apply for internationally protected migrants as long as family reunification is not possible in a third country and the application for family reunification is made within three months after the refugee status is recognized (Art 29.2 AufenthG). Afterwards, the condition can be expected but the local administration has some discretion. For parents reuniting with their children the condition generally does not apply (Art 36.1-2 AufenthG).

## 2.6 Sickness insurance

Health insurance falls under Art 5.1 AufenthG as part of the regular resource requirement. Thus, the same regulations apply for refugees regarding accommodation and income. Additionally, refugees who rely on social benefits are generally health insured and their family members are automatically ensured via the sponsor.

## 2.7 Minimum age

The spouse and sponsor of family migration need to be above the age of 18. Minor, unmarried children are admitted up to the age of 18. The age limitation was introduces as “preventive integration policy” (Triebl & Klindworth 2012) and linked to the problem of forced marriages (BT-Drucksache 16/5065:172). When the age requirement was introduced with the legal reform in 2007 the debate was particularly focused on Turkish migrants and on German nationals. Refugees were less the focus of the debate. Nevertheless the age requirement also applies to them. Another justification for the age requirement was EU harmonization. The fact that Dutch and Danish law had age requirements encouraged the German legislator to copy the requirement into German law. Children can reunite with their parent up to the age of 18. Children of accepted refugees do not have to fulfil any integration requirements (this is contrary to family reunification between third country nationals where minor children have to fulfil the pre-entry language requirements and have to have a good integration prospects when they are aged 16-18) (Art 32.1. no 1 AufenthG).

## 2.8 Practical issues

While there are few legal conditions to be fulfilled by accepted refugees for family reunification, there are considerable practical obstacles that limit family reunification for this group. Third country nationals who want to reunite with their third country family members generally have to obtain a visa for the purpose of family reunification at a German representation abroad. This procedure also applies for family reunification for international protected migrants. However, during the current refugee crisis, getting appointments for visa applications can take longer than a year. For example, since there is no foreign representations in Syria anymore, Syrian family members of recognized refugees have to apply for the visa from Turkey, Lebanon or other countries with German representations. In Lebanon, there are currently waiting periods of around 15 months to apply for a visa (Die Zeit 2016, d). Also in Turkey it currently takes more than nine months to obtain an appointment to apply for a visa for the purpose of family reunification (ibid). The procedures take even longer when family members fail to obtain the relevant documents or are prevented from entering the country where they have the appointment at the German representation. In order to speed up the procedures, the staff of embassies and foreign representation has been extended. For example, in Lebanon the staff of the foreign representation is now five times as large as before the refugee crisis (Die Zeit, 2016, d). There is also a discussion to make up for these delays by introducing an additional procedure through which the visa can be handled from within Germany. However, there is not yet a decision on that (ibid).

These practicalities are currently the main reasons why only very few family members of accepted refugees or migrants with a right of asylum reunite with their family (Tagesschau online 2016a, b). A parliamentary question from January 2016 indicates that from 2014 until end of September 2015 207,000 Syrian refugees had a right to family reunification but only 18,400 family members of Syrian refugees obtained a visa to join their family members (Drucksache 18/7200). Currently, there are highly diverse calculations in the media and in scientific reports, as well as reports provided by the German government, of how many additional family members of Syrian refugees are likely to apply for a visa for family reunification in the upcoming years. Some calculations assumed that around three additional family members per Syrian refugee could eventually apply for a visa. However, these numbers have been refuted by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF 2016). The BAMF argues that taking into account the age structure, number of children typical in Syria, and family members who already entered Germany together, one can expect that one additional family member will join the already accepted Syrian refugees. In 2015 around 428,000 Syrians refugees came to Germany and until May 2016 an additional 72,000 (Die Zeit 2016 e see also BAMF 2016). Consequently, up to 500,000 additional family members can be expected. This process is likely to take several months or years, due to the complicated procedure to obtain the visa and the possible development regarding the new policies with restricted family reunification for subsidiary protected migrants.

# 3. Family reunification of German citizen’s family members with foreign citizenship

## 3.1 Requirements on stable and regular resources (income)

Generally, there is no need for sufficient income in case a minor unmarried child wants to reunite with his or her German parent. Additionally, there is no income requirement for parents who want to reunite with their minor unmarried child (Art 28.1 sentence 2 AufenthG).

In the case of reunification to a spouse, the income requirement generally also does not apply when a German citizen reunites with his or her spouse (Art 28.1 sentence 3 AufenthG). However, there are specific cases in which the administration has discretion to demand that the family does not rely on public funding. This is the case when the sponsor has, besides German, also another nationality or very tight links to a third country where he or she could reasonably be expected to reunite with his or her spouse (Rotes Kreuz 2008, p. 20). Additionally, for a permanent residence permit, a verification of secure livelihood without obtaining benefits from public funds is required.

## 3.2. Other possible requirements related to family reunification of German citizen’s family members

For family members who reunite with a German citizen, the same integration requirements as for other third country nationals apply. That means a langue certificate at A1 level is required already before the spouse enters the country (Art 28.1 sentence 5 and Art 30 .1 sentence 1 no 2 AufenthG).

The family member can decide how he or she obtains the necessary language skills. They can be obtained via private classes or a course at the Goethe Institute abroad. Examination of the language level is done by the German Goethe Institute abroad or an institute approved by the Goethe Institute. The expected results are specified and shall include two months of private lessons, five days a week. The costs for pre-entry tests vary depending on the country of origin and must be paid by the applicant (e.g. in Turkey the fees range from 225-600 euros).

The requirement is irrelevant in case of disability, sickness or little need of integration (Art 28.1 sentence 5 and Art 30.1.sentence 3 AufenthG). Little need of integration is assumed for example for persons who possess a university-level degree. Besides this, general exceptions apply in case of hardship due to illiteracy or unavailability of language courses. If the family member is not able to fulfil the criterion after one year, the language course condition is waived. As with all the visa conditions, exceptions apply for EU citizens and when the family member can enter Germany without a visa (e.g. Japan, Australia, South Korea, USA, etc., see above).

After arrival, family members are normally obliged to participate in an integration course, including a language course at B1 level and an orientation test. Generally all children up to the age of 16 are exempted. Similar to third country national family migration, the spouse of the sponsor has to be above the age of 18 and minors of unmarried children can reunite with their parents until they reach their 18th birthday. The housing requirement does not apply explicitly for reunification of a national citizen.

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## 3.3 Impact of the requirement on overall scope

As discussed above, general family reunification and family reunification to German citizens declined since 2002 and remained relatively constant over the last years. Triebl & Klindworth (2012, p. 45) argue that there are several plausible reasons for the general decline. First of all, due to the EU accession process in 2004/2007 nationals of several new EU member states no longer required a visa for family reunification. Thus, this type of family reunification is simply no longer captured in the data. Additionally, it is claimed that after 2002 a general saturation of family migration was reached. It has also been claimed that the introduction of the pre-entry language requirements in 2007 could have contributed to the decline (ibid). However, it is difficult to isolate the effect of the language requirements from the general decline that already started in 2002. The general rise of family reunification in the last years is not driven by family reunification to German nationals but by third country family reunification.

## 3.4 Impact of the requirements on Families

While the scope of family reunification to Germans did not change much over the last years, the criteria might still affect families and the speed of the family reunification process. The following discusses the impact and evaluations of the different requirements.

**Income requirement**

For family reunification in general, the income requirement is a dominant reason for denying the visa for family reunification (Triebl & Klindworth 2012, Dörrenbächer 2016 interviews with decision makers of the local foreign registration offices). The criterion is handled slightly differently across the federal states and even within the federal states decision makers have some discretion how strictly the criterion is applied. However, it should be noted that the criterion applies mainly to third country family migration (e.g. Turkish sponsors reuniting with their Turkish spouses). For German citizens, the requirement normally does not apply (see above). Therefore, the requirement is likely to affect family reunification to nationals to a much lesser extent (no data on how many German citizens are denied family reunification due to the income requirement). The condition can become more problematic when a third country national joins the German spouse but has a third country national child from a different partner. In that case the third country child reunites not to the German stepparent but to the third country parent. In this case the income requirement can prevent children from reuniting with the third country parents in Germany (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). However, this situation is strictly not a case of family reunification to a German citizen and there is no data how often such a situation occurs. Otherwise, the income requirement can be a problem for German citizens with another nationality or with a migration background when they can be expected to live in their country of origin. However, there is no reliable data on how often this discretionary provision leads to a denial of the visa.

**Pre-entry Integration requirements**

The integration measures were introduced in 2007 with the RLUmsG/EU to prevent forced marriages and to facilitate integration. The pre-entry tests have been criticized since their introduction in 2007. It has been claimed that they constitute immigration control via compulsive integration measures and that they implicitly disadvantage less qualified migrants to live a family life (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). Evaluations of foreign spouses of this requirement is very diverse. Following Büttner and Stichs (2013, p. 7), one third of foreign spouses finds the obligation to pass the language test as highly stressful. Nevertheless, the study also shows that despite of the stress, more than 80% support the obligatory language tests. Important to note is that several of the respondents in this study entered Germany before the requirement was introduced.

Triebl & Klindworth (2012) come to slightly less favourable conclusions. On the positive side they find that family members find it useful to already have language skills when they enter Germany (ibid p.47, see also Will 2012). Additionally some family members mentioned that they find it helpful to build contacts to other course participants who will also migrate to Germany. These contacts proved helpful to some respondents of the study at first contact points (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). On a more critical note, the study finds that several respondents would prefer to learn German in the environment where they can actually use the language and learn it much faster. Following this study, respondents argued that this requirement prolongs separation from their partner for several months (Triebl & Klindworth, p. 54). The long separation from the partner can be seen as disadvantageous to the aim of learning German. Problems mentioned by some respondents are also long distances to the next language centre abroad, no accommodation near to the location, fully booked courses and the high costs. As a consequence to the criticism and the challenges by the European Court of Justice to the condition (see Dogan case[[24]](#footnote-24)), a hardship clause and further exceptions were introduced over the last years (see above).

Overall, passing rates of third country nationals who follow a course of the Goethe Institute tend to be higher than for those third country nationals who followed external courses. On average the passing rates are between 66-68% each year (BAMF 2014, p. 98). In 2014, the highest passing rates were obtained in Bosnia- Herzegovina (84%), China (83%), Russia (81%), Ukraine (80%), and Morocco (77%). In Turkey, where most family members come from, the passing rate was 65%. Relatively low passing rates were recently obtained in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Macedonia and Iran (around 60%) (ibid).

**Integration courses after entry**

Integration courses after entry are often mandatory after reuniting with the family. Without a successfully passed examination at the end of the course a more permanent residence status can in many cases not be obtained and only temporary residence status might be given. (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). The integration courses after entry consist of a language course and basic knowledge of the legal system, history and culture. Currently the courses consist of 660 hours. Special courses are offered for illiterate migrants, parents and young adults. As discussed above, part of the costs for the courses (approx. 1,287 Euros) have to be paid by the migrants but can be reimbursed if the migrant receives social benefits.

The integration courses are generally rated positively by most migrants (Will, 2012; Schuller et al 2011) and migrants are generally interested in taking part in the integration courses. According to the BAMF, there were around 8,200 courses with 115.158 participants in the first year after the law came into force (around half of those migrants who were eligible for the course took part) (see BpB 2005). A survey conducted by Will (2012, p. 14) involving course participants in Stuttgart and Berlin, found that almost all participants of the integration courses improved their language skills though the courses. However, the benefits of the courses go beyond the language skills. 93.2% of participants in the study indicated that the integration course helped them to become locally more active and committed. More than 80% argued that the course helped them to feel at home. Similarly, Schuller et al (2011) find with their panel data that most participants evaluate the course positively. Most participants value the course after participation even higher than before the course (Schuller et al 2011, p. 101). Schuller et al (2011) also find further positive effects of the integration courses. For example, the study shows that compared to a control group, participants of the integration courses increase their contacts to Germans. These effects are sustainable as the contacts persisted also after the end of the courses. Additionally, participants experience a stronger connection to Germany than the control group.

Next, with regard to access to the labour market the study found that migrants in the control group who did not participate in the integration course increased their employment only marginally within two years. However, participants of the integration courses were more likely to find a job within the two years following the course. Men who participated in the integration courses more frequently found full time jobs (from 10% to 34%), women increased their employment in part time jobs (from 7% to 19%). The higher the increase in language skills was between the questioning rounds, the higher were the chances that the respondents found a job. Schuller et al (2011) also find that the integration course is particularly beneficial for participants with children, who saw the added value of being able to communicate with their children’s teachers and to help their children with homework.

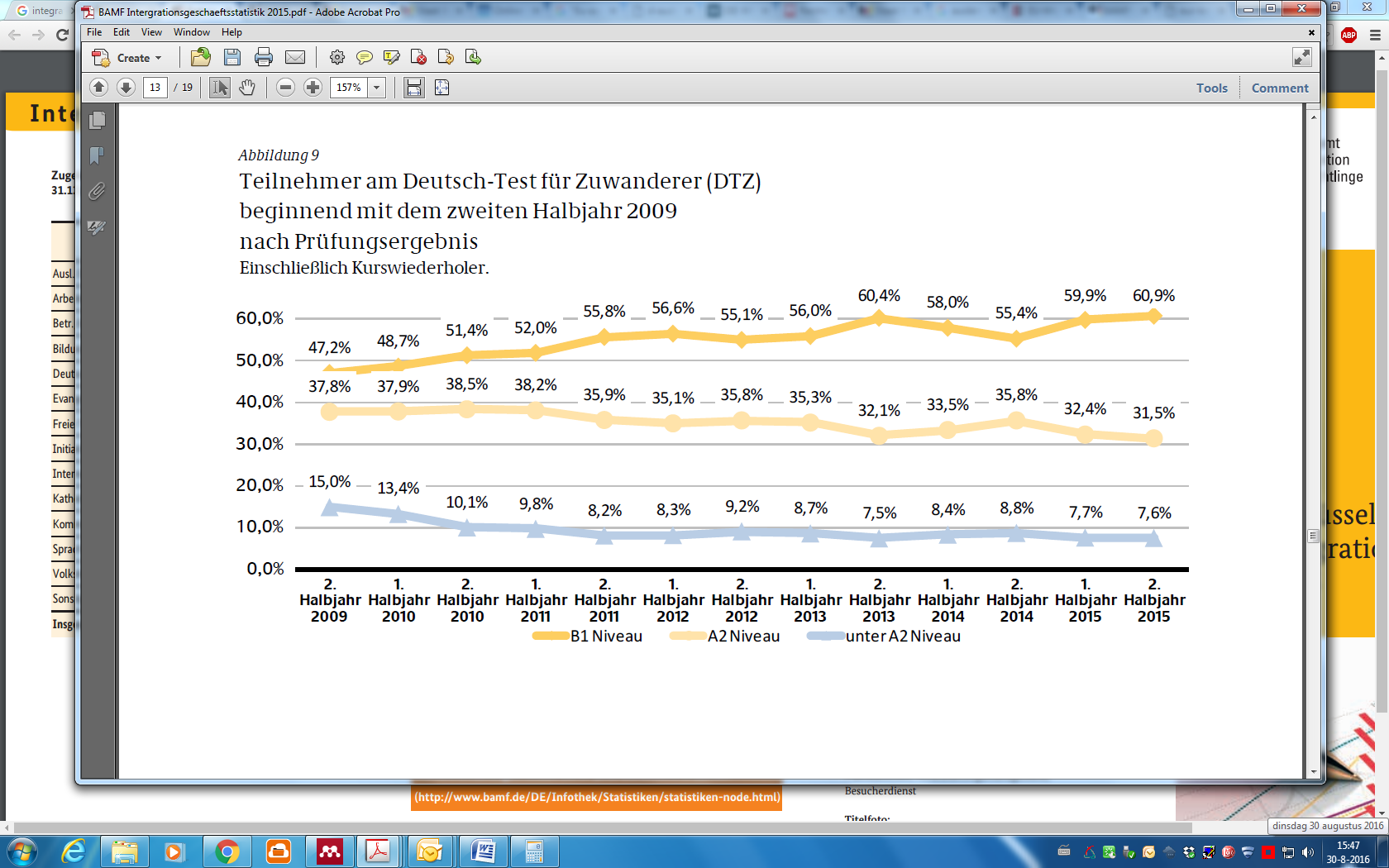
Overall, language skills are generally rated as the most important source of integration (Triebl & Klindworth 2012, p.58). Büttner and Stichs (2013) find in their large scale survey that foreign husbands generally judge their German language skills to be higher than foreign wives of the same country of origin. Amongst women, wives from Russia and Ukraine judge their language skills to be best. Wives from Turkey, Thailand, India and Pakistan tend to judge their language skills to be lowest. According to the authors, the language skills depend on a range of factors. An important aspect is the educational level. Spouses with a higher education tend to find it easier to learn German than spouses without higher education or with only basic educational levels. Another aspect is if spouses speak German with their partner or not. This is particularly the case in inter-ethnical marriages. Finally it is relevant how many contacts outside of the family the foreign spouse has. Particularly those who have a job learn German faster than those who do not work. This explains, according to the authors also why foreign husbands learn faster German then wives, because they are more often employed and through that socially more connected. Thus, particularly for wives with young children it is sometimes difficult to learn German and to find a job. To sum it up, the integration courses are found to facilitate social interactions and also to find a job.

However, it should be noted that the studies quoted above focused on a diverse population of migrants who participated in the courses. Thus, they did not focus specially on migrant who entered the country through family reunification (even though across the studies this group constituted at least half of the respondents). Additionally, if participants entered Germany through family reunification, this includes both migration to a German citizen and migration to a third country national. Thus, it might be that the effects of the integration course are particularly beneficial for third country family migrants who have little contact with Germans in their everyday live.

A critical aspect of the integration courses is that the costs are relatively high. Other reasons found by Will (2012) for not taking part in the integration courses were a lack of time of some respondents or a lack of information. Generally, if family members are unwilling or unable to pass the courses, there are no ways to expulse family members on this basis. However, the permanent residence permit is mostly not given and in some cases benefits can be shortened. The study by Büttner and Stichs (2013) shows that in their sample of foreign spouses only 6% decided not to follow an integration course.

The passing rates for the tests are relatively high. Following the data of the BAMF (2016) in 2015 around 60% of participants reach a language level at B1 and only 7.6% reach a language level below A2 (see figure 4). Regarding the orientation test, the passing rate in 2014 and 2015 were above 92% (ibid p. 16).

**Figure 4: Participation of integration courses along test results**



**Age requirements**

The aim of the age requirement was to prevent forced marriages (Triebl & Klindworth 2012). The success of these requirements is difficult to evaluate, as reliable numbers on forced marriages prior and after the age requirements do not exists. Many critics argue that forced marriages are simply postponed for a few years (Triebl & Klindworth 2012, p. 55). Beside the age requirement for spouses German law also includes age restrictions for family reunification of children. The age requirement for children and the integration measures for children aged 16-18 often leads to permanent separation of children and parents as children fail to meet the requirements. There is a debate if is in the best interest of the child to be excluded from family reunification, if they have no chances of integration in Germany or, if it would be better to reunite with their parents (ibid). However, as elaborated above, this requirement only applies in the case of third country family reunification and is less relevant for family reunification to a German citizen.

**Accommodation requirement**

In none of the studies is the accommodation requirement mentioned as a typical reason that prevents family reunification (Triebl & Klindworth 2012, p 54, this aspect is also supported by personal interviews conducted with decision makers in the foreign registration offices in spring 2015). As noted above, the requirement generally does not apply to Germany citizens.

# 4. Economic impacts of family reunifications

The impacts discussed below focus, as much as possible, on family migration. In case of lack of data more general groups of migrants, such as refugees or general migrants are investigated. It needs to be stressed that the different groups of migrants are limited in their comparability. Even with regard to data on family reunification, it needs to be pointed out that this often includes third country family reunification which was in the last years the largest group of family reunification. This constitutes a group of family reunification that is not the explicit focus of this report but cannot be filtered out in most studies quoted below. Data that focuses only on family reunification between refugees or to a German citizen hardly exists. Thus, it needs to be taken into account that family migration to a German spouse, to a refugee or to a third country national, might pose very different challenges, costs and benefits than migration of more general groups of migrants.

## 4.1 Short term costs and benefits of family reunifications

As a general conclusion of the studies investigated and explored in more detail below, it becomes clear that the short term investments into the group of refugees (and their family members) largely determine the long term costs and benefits of the influx of refugees and their family members. Particularly short term costs regarding integration, language leaning, education, diploma recognition and providing access to the labour market are highlighted in most studies to be manageable compared to the long term benefits which an increased labour force constitutes for the public budget. Contrary, a lack of investment in the short run can lead to high long term costs, particularly in terms of integrating refugees and their family members into the labour market.

## 4.2 Employment and wellbeing of family members

This sub-chapter first outlines the effects of family reunification on the general wellbeing, education levels and employment levels of migrants who entered Germany through general family reunification (not explicitly involving refugees). The second part elaborates on studies that focused on the wellbeing, education levels and employment rates of refugees. More specific data on family members of refugees is so far lacking. Finally some effects of immigration on the German labour market are discussed.

## 4.3 Wellbeing, education and employment of reunited family members (not explicitly including refugees)

Most studies show that the wellbeing of family members who reunite with their foreign spouses increases after family reunification. For example, a study by Will (2012, p 30) investigates integration among 1,220 third country nationals in Stuttgart and Berlin. In their sample migrants who entered Germany through family migration were the largest group. The study shows that most respondents indicated that for their emotional connection to the place of living the closeness of the spouse had a positive effect. Additionally, more than half of the respondents in this survey indicated that family reunification was beneficial for them in finding a job. Around 10% indicated that reuniting with their spouses helped them in their education.

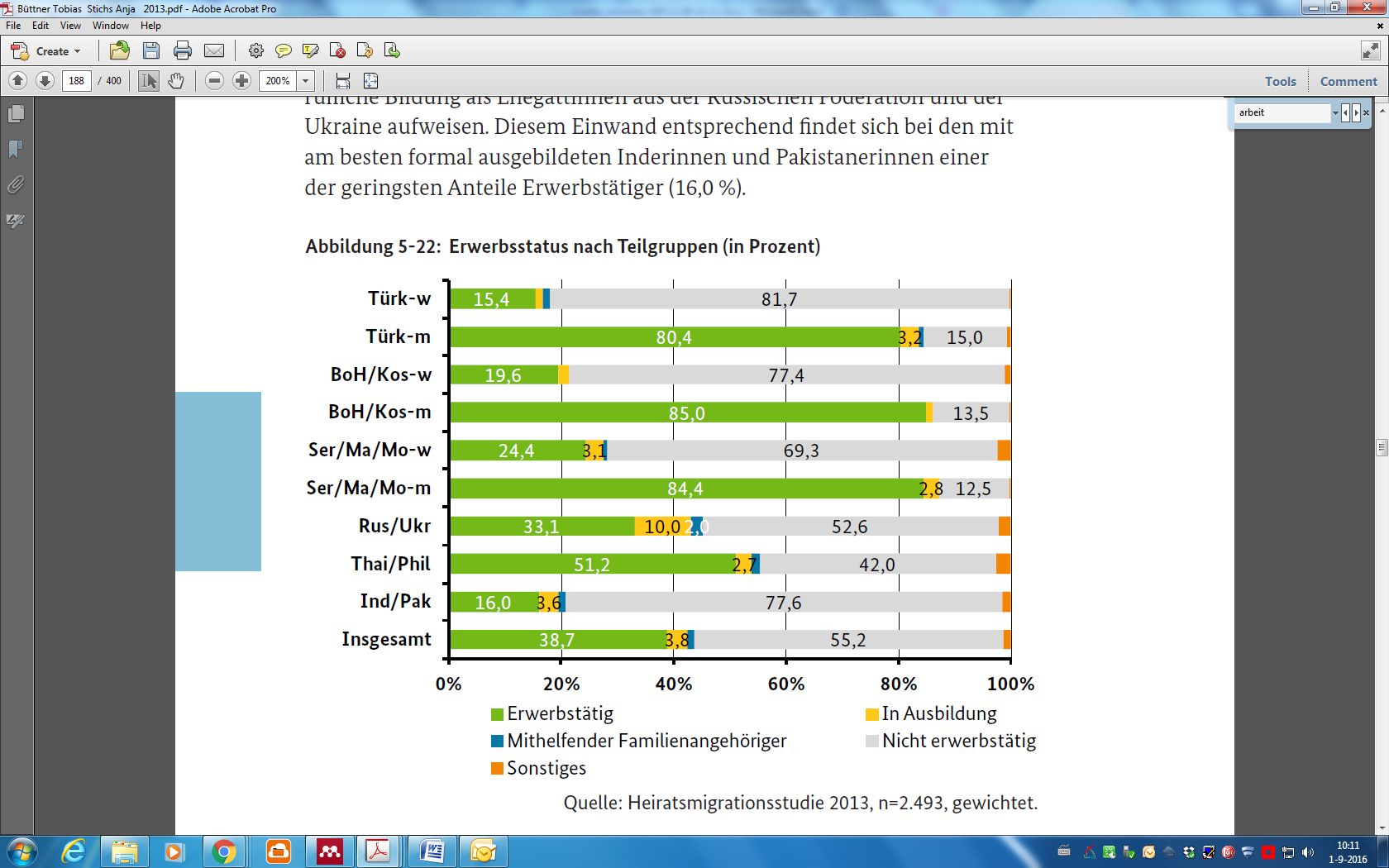
Regarding general wellbeing in terms of social contacts, most foreign spouses (80%) are in contact with Germans without a migration background at least once a week. Less than 5% of family members do not have any contacts to Germans. The frequencies of friendships show that meetings with friends from the own migration community are more frequent than meetings with German friends. Most spouses who have many friends within their migration community also have more friendships with Germans. 30% of foreign spouses do not meet with any friends every week. The study concludes that especially in the first years after migration, it can be difficult for foreign spouses to find social contacts. Contrary to labour migration, family members are not directly socially connected through a job. This can have implications for family members’ wellbeing. Male family members generally find it easier to connect to social networks which is related to their better integration in the labour force (see below).

Another aspect of wellbeing is the wellbeing of the sponsor of family reunification (German national, third country national or refugee) and the foreign family member in the case where family reunification is postponed, complicated or even denied. As most studies show (e.g. Triebl & Klindworth 2012, p. 51), being separated from spouses, parents and/or children is highly stressful for all family members involved and can lead to considerable psychological and physical problems that may affect family relations and the ability to work. The costs of reduced wellbeing due to prevented family reunification are impossible to calculate, but they might be still highly relevant.

Coming to the level of education of foreign spouses, a study by Büttner and Stichs (2013) focuses on the integration of foreign spouses. The data is based on a survey from 2013 of 2,500 third country national spouses. The study finds that the level of education of foreign spouses is on average relatively high compared to the German population. Around 43% of the spouses had a university entry qualification in the country of origin. Only every tenth spouse did not graduate from high school. 55% of foreign spouses have a University degree or other vocational degree. However, only 15% of these degrees are recognized as being equal to a German degree. For University degrees the recognition rate is higher than for vocational qualifications.

Regarding employment of migrants who came through family migration to Germany, there is a big gender gap (Büttner and Stichs 2013). Most foreign husbands who came as family member to Germany are employed. However, as the figure below shows, many foreign wives who joined their husbands to Germany do not work. There are considerable differences across nationality of foreign spouses. For example, the proportion of female spouses from Turkey who do not work is considerably higher than the proportion of Thai and Philippine wives who do not work.

**Figure 5: Employment status of foreign spouses along country of origin and gender**



(Büttner and Stichs 2013, p. 188)

The study also investigated reasons for those who do not work. Many foreign wives argued that they have to take care of their children and could therefore, not work. Men, who were unemployed, mentioned more often that they do not find an adequate job. More than 70% of the employed foreign spouses included in the study work in simple jobs. For many of them this does not correspond to their job qualifications. One reasons for this is the relatively low recognition rate of foreign qualifications. This is a general problem for foreign family members, regardless is they reunite with a German citizen, third country national or refugee.

A more substantial large scale study that focuses particularly on the participation in the labour market of family members who came through family migration to Germany, is currently planned by the BAMF[[25]](#footnote-25). First results are expected in 2017.

### Wellbeing, education and employment of refugees

Due to the lack of data regarding family members of refugees, the following summarises the wellbeing, education level and employment rates of dominant refugee groups in Germany. This may constitute a reference point for the family members of those refugees. First of all, it is relevant to note that contrary to family migration to a German citizen or a third country national who has already lived for many years in Germany, refugees and their family members are in a less favourable situation. Mostly, they did not voluntarily migrate to Germany for work purposes and often both spouses lack social networks that contribute to wellbeing and access to the labour market. Additionally, trauma and the escape experience separate this group from regular family reunification. Particularly for this group the unity of the family might be highly important for the psychological and physiological wellbeing. This is particularly true if family members remain in war areas. There is no hard data on the effects on wellbeing in case family reunification is or is not granted because such scenarios are impossible to investigate.

Coming to the educational level of refugees, the German government argued in October 2015 that so far, there is no representative study regarding the qualification structure of asylum seekers and refugees in Germany (BT-Drucksache. 18/6420: 2). Qualification and employment differ considerably depending on the country of origin, and social stratum of refugees. The educational patterns continuously change along the location of international crisis. A study by Worbs and Bund (2016) conducted for the BAMF provides a first indication of at least a sub-group of refugees and migrants eligible for asylum. The study was conducted in 2014 and included 2,800 migrants eligible for asylum and accepted refugees. The study focused on nationals of the main countries of origin of the current refugee influx: Afghanistan, Erit­rea, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka and Syria. Respondents were aged between 18 and 69. In their results, the authors focus particularly on respondents from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria as the currently most relevant group of refugees in Germany. In line with the demographic structure of refugees who came to Germany, most of the respondents were below 35 and male (two thirds male and one third female). The respondents had submitted their asylum application between 2007 and 2012.

The study shows that 70% of the respondents had 5-14 years of formal education. Around 13% of the respondents had no educational qualification. 10% could be classified as highly educated. Women from Iraq had the lowest educational background. Interestingly, Iraqi men managed to find access to the labour market relatively well, compared to refugees from other countries. However, this group of refugees entered Germany earlier and had often already a more secure residence status. Refugees from Afghanistan took part in (vocational) education more often than the other groups, which might be connected to the relatively young average age of this group of refugees. More than a third of the respondents were employed.

Refugee women participated considerably less often in the German labour market (11.5%) compared to men (49.8%). Employment is mostly limited to specific sectors and limited to jobs that require low or medium qualification. Typical jobs were in the following sectors: Gastronomy (e.g. as kitchen help in fast food restaurants), logistic (e.g. warehouse, parcel service, forklift truckers), cleaning business (building, textile, car), food production and selling. Less than 20% of the employed had a job that required an academic degree. Thus, a considerable portion of refugees works below their job qualification. Integration measures and diploma recognition could tackle this aspect.

The motivation to work was very high among all refugees included in the study, across gender and country of origin. Particular Syrian refugees highlighted the wish to work with more than 90%. The desire to stay permanently in Germany and to obtain German citizenship was also relatively high. When being asked what their biggest wish for the future is, the most actively articulated wish is to be integrated into the German labour market through enhanced education or employment and to be not dependent on state welfare. Another wishes included to reunite with their families, education for their children, stability and peace.

A current study by Brückner et al. (2015) made very similar findings. The study shows that compared to other migration groups, refugees tend to have lower levels of employment qualifications but regarding schooling the differences are less pronounced. This might be related to the very young age of many refugees which still have considerable potential for employment qualifications to be gained in the next years. The report by Brückner et al. (2015) also indicates that while the employment rates of migrants in general rose over the last years, the influx of refugees might, at least on a short term, increase the unemployment rates. The figure below compares employment rates of refugees and other migrants over time. The green line indicates that it takes refugee on average more years to join the labour market than other migrants (blue line).

**Figure 6: Employment rates of refugees and other migrants over time after entering Germany (in percentage)**



Source: Brückner et al (2015, p. 10)

According to Hüther & Geis (2016, p. 7) the problem of a lower employment rate among refugees compared to other migration groups increased in the last year. The authors refer to a current study of Federal employment agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2016a). Following this study, in December 2015 50,000 people of the primary countries of origin of refugees (Afghanistan Eritrea, Iraq and Syria) were employed in jobs that are subject to social insurance contribution. Compared to that in February 2016 90,000 people of this group of migrants were unemployed and 230,000 received social benefits.

Regarding the type of jobs refugees have, particularly the situation of Syrian nationals is unfavourable compared to other nationals. Syrians are relatively seldom employed in jobs that require a certain level of qualification. However, Syrians score better compared to other groups of refugees regarding jobs that require expert knowledge. The table below summarizes the pattern of employment among the largest refugee nationalities in Germany (Hüther & Geis 2016).

**Table 2: Percentage of jobs that is subject to social insurance contribution along nationality and specialization level**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Specialization level | Total | Afghanistan | Eritrea | Iraq | Syria |
| Expert | 12.5 | 2.5 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 21.8 |
| Skilled worker | 71.9 | 58.7 | 39.1 | 47.3 | 37.6 |
| Assistant | 15 | 38.1 | 58.4 | 49.5 | 40.2 |
| No information | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.4 |

Note: expert relates mainly to jobs that require an academic qualification, Skilled worker requires some form of education of skills, assistant relates to work that requires no special training

Overall, the evaluations of the chances of refugees at the German labour market differ considerably across studies and experts. Following a research by the West German Broadcasting (WDR 2015), there is an agreement among labour market experts that the German labour market can cope with the influx of refugees or even requires them to fill open positions, even if refugees only fill jobs that require low qualification. However, the report also highlights that it takes often a considerable amount of time to place refugees into jobs.

Experiences from the past (e.g. Brückner et al. 2015) show that the employment rate of refugees in the year when they enter Germany is below 10%. However, five years after entry, half of the refugees tend to be employed and 15 years after entry 70% found a job. Important to note is that in the past the legal and institutional conditions for refugees at the labour market were worse. As chapter 1 shows, integration into the labour market is currently a central priority of German policies. This includes integration measures, encouraging employers to hire refugees and the start of several pilot projects. Additionally, the situation of the German labour market improved over the last years. Thus, it remains unclear if it will still take several years to integrate refugees into the labour market.

To speed up this process, there are several pilot projects at the local level. For example for Berlin, a new webpage was launched where refugees and employers only have to fill in a simple form to connect them with each other. In another pilot project, students launched an office in one of the reception centres to match refugees to employers.

In order to investigate the attitudes of German employers regarding hiring refugees, IW Köln (a private economic research institute) initiated a survey in 2016 among 900 enterprises. The survey was executed through IW Consult and tackled particularly the directors of enterprises from industry and industry related service providers (see Hüther & Geis 2016). The study finds that in the enterprises there is a general interest to employ refugees. 7% of the enterprises already employ or have employed refugees in the last 5 year. Additionally, 11% of the enterprises that so far do not employ refugees, plan to do so in the future. Of those enterprises that already employ refugees, 40% plan to hire additional refugees. This points towards positive experiences. The main barriers for employment mentioned by the directors is the language barrier (3/4 of the respondents mentioned this aspect) and 60% mentioned that adequate qualification constitutes a barrier for employment. Half of the respondents mention the insecurities due to the residence status as a reason for not hiring refugees. Thus, through language courses, education and more secure residence status more refugees might be hired.

### Impact on the German labour market

The chapter above discussed employment rates of foreign family members and refugees. Generally studies agree that once refugees and other migrants join the labour force and pay taxes they contribute more to the public budget than what they cost (see chapter below). However, rising employment rates among refugees and other migrants often creates the fear that Germans and foreigners might compete for the same jobs. So far, the studies consulted for this report do not support this fear. Nevertheless, Brückner et al. (2015) argue that due to the German employment structure, refugees tend to compete for jobs with other migrants but to a lesser extent with Germans (ibid p. 8).

With regard to the general foreign population, it is even found that many foreigners become entrepreneurs and create new jobs. For example, a recent study in 2014 by the Bertelsmann foundation (Sachs et al 2016) investigated the entrepreneurial activities of people with a migrant background (own migration experience or parents with migration experience). The study finds that this group created more than two million jobs across Germany (ibid p. 58). The study drew on data from a micro census and argues that the investment in education and needs-based support and advisory services across the German Bundeslander increase the contributions made by the self-employed with a migrant background to the economy and societal integration. Additionally, the structure of enterprises changed over the last years. While in 2005 38% of the self-employed with a migrant background worked in the retail and hospitality sectors, the figure shrunk to 28% by 2014. Self-employed with a migrant background are now more actively engaged in other services that also include knowledge-intensive services and the manufacturing and construction industries (Sachs et al 2016 p. 58). However, there is high variation across the German Länder regarding the proportion of entrepreneurs with a migration background. Additionally, it needs to be highlighted that this study focused on a very broad population of people with a migration background. Migrants who came through family migration to Germany or as family member of a refugee are likely to engage, at least in the short-run less often into entrepreneurial activities as this requires familiarity with German regulations, and specific skills. There is no data on this specific group and their impact on the German labour market.

## 4.3 Impact on population structure

### Population structure of family migration general (not specific to refugees)

In their study on foreign spouses, Büttner and Stichs (2013) find that on average foreign spouses come to Germany as young adults. In their representative sample, 80% of the spouses were aged 18-34 when they entered Germany. That means that foreign spouses enter Germany at a point in life where there is still considerable room for development. Marriage age and entry age often correlate. Most of the spouses in the sample have, or plan to have children and they generally plan to stay in Germany permanently. The proportion of foreign mothers with small children is especially high among foreign spouses from Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo and Turkey. It is relatively low among wives from Thailand and Philippines.

The study also shows that even if family reunification occurs to a third country national, spouses tend to reunite with a partner who was either born in Germany or who lived more than ten years on average in Germany. The percentage of German nationals with a migration background (born abroad of parents with different nationality) who reunite with a third country national tends to be higher than for the average German population (ibid p. 9). Thus, only 20% of marriages of the population of family reunifications include partners of different ethnicity.

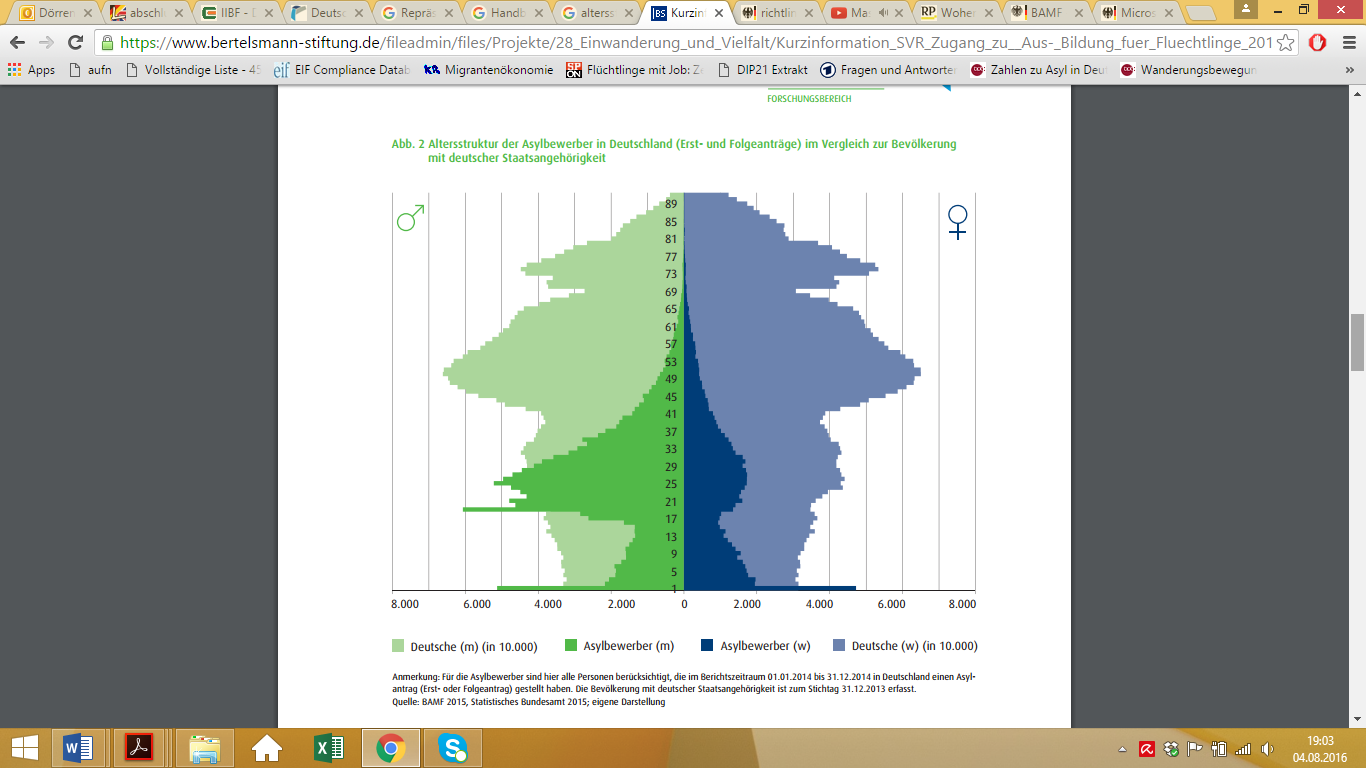
Regarding population structure, two conclusions can be drawn. First, family migration is generally driven by foreign partners who are still young. This offers potential regarding Germany’s demographic problems. Second, most families plan to stay permanently in Germany. This makes long term investments for integration and access to the labour market particularly important.

### Populations structure of Refugees

Contrary to general family reunification (to a German citizen or third country national), family ties between an accepted refugee and his/her spouse and children are not necessarily timely connected to the date of entering Germany. Instead, family ties may exist already long before a refugee left his or her country of origin. Thus, in order to establish expectations on the impact of the population structure for family reunification between refugees it is important to consider the demographic structure of the refugees who entered Germany in the last years. From this, one can conclude on the scope and age structure of family members who are likely to join. Figure 7 below shows in dark colour the age structure of the asylum seekers who applied for asylum in Germany in 2015. Behind this, the figure shows in light colour the age structure of the German population. The figure shows that the portion of young male asylum seekers is much more dominant than in the German population.

Assuming that the demographic structure of accepted refugees looks similar to that of the asylum seekers, several expectations regarding the demographic impact of family reunification can be drawn. First, the group of minors can only apply for family reunification when they entered German unaccompanied. In this case, they can be expected to be joined by their parents if parents can be identified. Second, while the group of refugees between 18 and the beginning of their twenties is very large, they are too old to be eligible to bring their parents and they are mostly too young to have a family on their own (see also BAMF 2016). Next, the proportion of refugees over the age of 35 is relatively low, particularly compared to the aging German population. The group of refugees that can be expected to apply most actively for family reunification are likely to be young adults who aim to reunite with their spouses and/or their children. Thus, family reunification is likely to lead to an influx of young women and children. This can be an opportunity for the demographic problems which Germany is facing.

Figure 7: Demographic structure Germans (in 10,000) and asylum seekers



Source: Schultz (2015)

In this light, a study of the *Institute der deutschen Wirtschaft Köln* (Institute of the German economy Cologne) by Deschermeier (2016, p. 3) calculated a stochastic population prognosis for Germany for the next years. The prognosis takes into account the influx of migrants in 2015 and the net increase of migrants that is expected due to follow up migration in the next years. Deschermeier (2016) calculates that until 2035 there will be a population increase of 1.2 million leading to a German population of 83.1 Million. The prognosis assumes a net migration influx of 850.000 people for the year 2016 and a long term decline of net influx of 218.000 migrants. The study stresses that even assuming such net influxes over the coming years will not prevent the aging of the German population which will continue to challenge the social security system.

## 4.4 Positive impacts on the economy (taxes, work force etc.)

The general impact of migration on the economy and general welfare is a highly contested issue and economic studies come to highly diverse conclusions, depending on the group of migrants that are included in the studies and particularly on the underlying assumptions and calculation models. A study that focuses only on family migration and even distinguishes between different types of family migrants, to our knowledge, does not exist for Germany. Thus, to provide some indications of the complexity of the issue and the importance of underlying assumptions, the following will first compare and discuss the results of those studies that attempt to calculate the effects of general migration on the economy. Next the effects of refugees on the economy are investigated and finally some cautious implications of family migration are drawn.

### Impacts of general migration on the economy

Before discussing the net effects of migration on the state budget it needs to be stressed that the net contributions or costs of foreign populations depends on a range of key assumption. The most crucial aspect is the time frame that is used because there tends to be higher costs in the short term but higher benefits in the long term. Next, the assumptions regarding costs and benefits for the public budget, in case of no further immigration can lead to very diverse results. Additionally, depending on assumptions on who uses and pays for public goods, conflicting results emerge. Finally, one needs to be very cautious to draw conclusion on specific types of migrants from calculations that include all foreign residents.

Overall, studies that come to a negative balance of migration (see the calculations by Sinn 2015), make at least three far reaching assumptions (Brücker 2015). First, it is assumed that migration does not change the income of the German population. However, there are no reliable calculations of the effects on the public budget if no migrants enter Germany. For example, with regard to the demographic situation and consumption the income of the German population might be lower without migration (particularly in the long run). Additionally, particularly with regard to family reunification the counterfactual situation that families do not reunite might create unknown cost in terms of psychological and social support.

A second assumption made by studies that come to a negative balance relates to the distribution of public costs and benefits among the foreign and national population and the assumption that foreigners use public services in the same amount as Germans. However, first of all there is very limited empirical evidence on the use of public good of the foreign population. Second, including all public spending in the calculation also leads to a negative balance for the general German population (for more detail see[[26]](#footnote-26)).

Third, studies that come to a net deficit due to migration assume that there are no advantages in providing public goods for a larger population (e.g. the costs for using public goods is proportional to the population growth). However, with many public goods there is an economies of scale effect (e.g. for defence) (Brücker 2015).

An example of a study that attempts to calculate the net effects of migration on the economy is a study by the Bertelsmann foundation (the largestprivately operating non-profit foundation in Germany) executed by Bonin (2014) from the Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung (ZEW). The project manager of the study (Franco Zotta of the Bertelsmann foundation), highlighted that the ZEW relied on international standards for the calculation of the fiscal balance per inhabitant where it is common to calculate only the personal costs that are directly related to each individual. Costs for the military, road construction and administration are not directly related to the number of migrants. Therefore, they are taken into account but not proportionally as individual costs.

The study concludes that migration constitutes a release for the welfare state, meaning that migrants contribute more to the public budget than what they receive though public benefits. Bonin (2014) relies on data from 2012 and calculates all social benefits which the 6.6 million foreigners that lived in 2012 in Germany received (including expenditures for education and education promotion) and compares them to the amount of taxes and fees which foreigners transferred to the state in the same year. This calculation leads to net earnings for the state of 3,300 euros per foreigner which means a surplus of 22 billion euros for the German state. Similar conclusions were drawn in previous studies (see Bonin 2014). For example, for 2004 a net earnings of 2,000 euros per foreigner was calculated and in 2006 earnings of 1,900 euros per migrant. Bonin (2014) explains the increase of state earnings in 2012 with the good labour market situation in Germany in the last years (see also Brücker 2015 BAMF study on fiscal effects).

Bonin’s study highlights that the average net income of foreigners was 700 euros below the average net income of German nationals in 2012. The Bertelsmann foundation explains the differences in surplus between the German population and foreigners with the fact that even though the level of qualification among foreigners has been raising in the last years, it is on average still lower than in the German population, particularly among first generation guest labourers (Ataman 2014). This leads to lower tax earnings for the state, compared to German nationals. However, comparing Germans and foreigners with the same level of qualification shows that the fiscal effects are comparable (ibid).

Additionally, Bonin (2014) shows that 67% of foreigners still come to a positive balance in 2012, compared to only 60% of German nationals. This aspect is explained by the fact that the foreign population is, on average, much younger than the aging German population. The older German population relies more actively on public benefits compared to what they pay the state through taxes and other fees. As Brücker (2015) argues, the demographic changes in Germany will lead, in the long term, to increasing transfer payments to the older generation. Without migration, the current public income and costs of Germany will lead to a sustainability gap of 3.3% of GDP.

Bonin (2014) argues that the state benefits of migration can be extended by increasing the education and qualification level of the foreign population. If the foreign population below the age of 30 that lived in 2012 already in Germany obtained the same level of education as the average German population, the foreign population would contribute over the course of their lives 118,400 euros per foreigner to the German state budget.

Bonin’s (2014) study led to a call to pay more attention to the level of qualification of migrants. As several media outlets ([Böcking](http://www.spiegel.de/impressum/autor-9695.html), 2014) and the Bertelsmann Foundation highlight, this should not only mean that highly qualified migrants are attracted to Germany, but also that the existing migration population should receive better access to education and qualification. Particularly with regard to the influx of young asylum seekers who are still in an education relevant age, this calculation has been used to call for the abolishment of restrictions to education and employment. The recent policy changes in this direction are seen as an indicator that refugees are increasingly seen as potential high achievers of society.

### Impact of specific migration groups on the economy

As the discussion above shows, the effects of general migration on the fiscal budget and general welfare depends on many assumption and insecure future expectations. Additionally, the studies discussed above do not distinguish between different groups of foreigners. Thus, EU citizens, refugee’s family migrants etc. are all lumped together. Obviously, the different groups have highly diverse needs and contribute in different ways to the fiscal income.

**Family migration to Germans**

Considering the group of family migrants who join a German national, the studies discussed before showed that family members are mostly relatively young and have or plan to have children. Additionally, they tend to have the intention to stay permanently in Germany. This means that in the short run, this group of migrants might require more support for integration than EU citizens or highly qualified migrants who only stay for several months or years in Germany. However, particularly in the long run, they are likely to contribute to the public budget, due to their young age and relatively high levels of education which can lead to long term tax revenues for the state. Besides this, they are likely to have in the long run similar needs for public goods as the German population.

**Refugees**

As mentioned before, the group of refugees and, thus also their family members, face special challenges that might have implications for their contribution to the state budget. As Hüther & Geis (2016) highlight, utilitarian calculations are not appropriate considerations for policy making in the field of asylum and refugees. Contrary to labour and research migration, accepted refugees come for humanitarian purposes and their migration choice is mostly not voluntary. However, the calculations can help to plan the state budget and to identify investment possibilities that benefit the state budget.

In light of the economic effects of refugees, studies come to different conclusions, depending on the long term assumptions they make regarding the influx of migration and the speed of integration to the labour market. In order to calculate an estimate of refugees cost, a study by IW-Köln (Hüther & Geis 2016) assumes that in 2015 1.1 million refugees entered Germany, in 2016 0.8 million and in 2017 0.5 million refugees will arrive in Germany. Due to statistical overhang, the study assumes that Germany will face on a yearly cumulated average (including refugees and family reunification with refugees) 1.5 million asylum seekers in 2016 and 2.2 Million in 2017. The study further assumes that 80% of the asylum seekers will be accepted as refugees and that 70% of the refugees are in an employment relevant age. After six months of processing the asylum application, 75% are expected to be available for the labour market. Next, it is assumed that in 2016 25% find employment and in 2017 30% find a job. After one year, when the refugees receive a residence permit, an additional 5% (in 2016) and 10% (in 2017) find a job. Asylum benefits and social benefits, including care and accommodation are calculated at 1,000 euros per month per refugee. Language courses and integration courses are calculated at one billion euros for 2015 and five billion for 2016 and 2017. Based on these assumptions, the study estimates that short term costs for the state budget will be around 55 billion Euro. The most important cost factor depends on how fast accepted refugees integrate into the labour market (the table in the appendix summarizes the assumed costs).

Lücke (2015) from Ifw Kiel (Institut für Weltwirtschaft, an economics research centre and a think tank) come to similar results as Hüther & Geis (2016). Lücke (2015) assumes yearly costs for administration, individual costs and investments for refugee reception of 13,000 euros per refugee. Similar amounts are assumed by the Deutsche Städtetag which represents the German municipalities which are mainly responsible for these costs. However, several studies indicate that these costs will be lower the sooner refugees are integrated in the labour market.

As discussed above, the current employment rates among refugees are relatively low and in low qualification jobs. While enterprises are generally interested to hire refugees, language and qualification barriers first need to be resolved. The exact financial means required to provide for relevant job qualifications is difficult to calculate because there is a lack of empirical insights regarding the language and qualification structure among the refugee population. Lücke (2015) argues that while a yearly support of additional 1,000 euros per refugee to facilitate access to the labour market would increase short term costs, already after a few years, the costs would balance out. This applies even if it only leads to marginally faster access to employment. Measures that could speed-up access to the labour market could be policies regarding language courses, education, recognition of diploma and formal access to the labour market.

The studies discussed above all stress that there are considerable insecurities in their calculations, due to the far-reaching assumptions that have to be made. Besides the unknown speed of labour market integration, the amount of refugees that will arrive is unknown. Similarly, it is unclear how many refugees plan to stay permanently in Germany and the amount of family members they will bring. Moreover, the effects of the current policies to facilitate access to the labour market of refugees are not known, nor are the general developments of the German labour market.

In addition to all uncertainties, it needs to be taken into account that an increase in public spending for refugees are likely to lead to increased economic activity in the short term (Hüther & Geis 2016). In the intermediate term, negative effects on the sustainability of the state budget are expected. However, depending on the labour market developments, long term effects could be positive again, particularly taking demographics and labour market developments into account (for long term effects see the chapter above on general migration).

Finally, the effects of family migrating to refugees are difficult to estimate. The findings discussed above suggest that those who reunite with their families increase their employment rates and general psychological wellbeing which might save costs for the public. However, assuming that mostly women join their husbands that are accepted as refugees and considering the low employment rates of female refugees, new efforts to integrate refugee women into the labour market might be required.

# 5. Administrational impacts of family reunifications

## 5.1 Administrational work and costs of public administration

Administrative costs can be process costs of deciding on the visas for family reunification and extending residence permits. Beside this there might be general administrative costs through a rising population regarding public services. Starting with procedural costs, the visas for family reunification needs to be approved by the foreign representations aboard and the local foreign registrations of the municipality, where the family member lives in Germany. Particularly in the case of refugees who want to reunite with their family, the local foreign registration offices in Germany are only marginally involved. This is due to the fact that those conditions that normally have to be checked for third country nationals (income condition etc.) do not need to be investigated for accepted refugees (as long as they stay within the three month limit). Nevertheless, also the local administration at the municipality level experience considerable workload due to the current refugee influx and family reunification applications. However, there are no generalizable cost measurements because these administration are operationalized at the local level and there are considerable differences across Länder and across municipalities within the Länder regarding the budgets and tasks of the foreign registration offices. Generally it can be assumed that the administrative process costs depend, besides the amount of applications also on the complexity of the administrative procedures, the amount of documents that need to be checked and conditions that need to be fulfilled. Also the length of the residence permits that are granted affects how often the administration has to check and renew permits which can be a cost factor for the local administrations (personal interview at a local foreign registration office)

As discussed above, the foreign representations also experience considerable workload which explain the long waiting periods at the embassies and consulates in Turkey and other relevant foreign representations. As discussed in several media outlets (see chapter 2), the number of staff has been increased in those foreign representations that handle many of the family visas from family members of Syrian refugees. However, I did not find data on concrete increases of budgets for these foreign representations.

The next chapters evaluate the substantive costs for the administration that go beyond the procedure of granting family reunification.

## Accommodation costs for the public sector

**Accommodation for family reunification with a German citizen**

There are no numbers available for accommodation costs for family reunification as such. For family reunification between German citizens and third country nationals, no specific public accommodation costs are likely because German citizens mostly already live in an apartment. In case children are involved, larger apartments might be required but there is no difference in costs compared to fully German family formation.

**Accommodation for Refugees**

The current refugee influx (including family reunification) is likely to influence public accommodation costs. However, again the calculations of how many houses are required due to the refugee influx is based on many assumptions regarding the scope of refugee influx in the next years, the amount of family reunifications and how many refugees aim to stay on a more permanent basis in Germany, as well as the general demand for social housing that currently exists in Germany.

Regardless of the refugee influx, Germany currently faces a general demand for affordable housing and social housing. According to a study by Günther (2015) around 400,000 new apartments need to be available each year to cover the needs of the general population with a low income and to house refugees. Of that housings, 80,000 needs to be social housing with controlled prices. In 2015, 260,000 apartments were built of which 120,000 are rented apartments. This leads to a lack of 140,000 apartments (Die Zeit 2015). Besides the 80,000 social housings, the study by Günther argues that 60,000 apartments with affordable prices are needed. Generally, the study calculates that the state has to invest 6.4 billion euros, of those 3.6 billion would be re-earned through taxes. The Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety responsible for construction calculates that around 350,000 apartments per year are necessary. Generally, the federal level faces some limits to establish such policies on social housings because this field is officially not a task of the federal level. The possibilities to subsidise the Länder will be further limited in the next years. Additionally, it should be stressed that these housing requirements are calculated not only for the influx of refugees but also to cover the lack of general social housing in Germany.

An IW report by Deschermeier et al (2016, p. 3) calculates the demand for housing in different scenarios of refugee influx. While scenario one assumes that the expectations of the government about rising refugee numbers are correct in the next years, the second scenario assumes a general stop of refugee influx in 2017. Both scenarios rely on relatively extreme expectations and serve to provide a projected interval of required housing. The first scenario leads to the estimation of an average demand of 380,000 apartments per year until 2020. The second scenario expects a 20% lower demand for housing (310.000 apartments). Following this study, the demand for housing that can be distributed solely to the influx of migration ranges between 67,800 and 158,000 apartments per year (figure 8 below).

**Figure 8: Two scenarios of newly required accommodations**



Source: Deschermeier et al (2016, p. 11)

The study stresses that a problem is the high concentration of housing demands in central cities. At the same time, there is a high proportion of empty houses in rural areas. Particularly in Easter Germany there are up to 10% of empty housings without a prospect of change. The heterogeneity of housing demands exists regardless of the migration influx. Particularly the cities Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich and Stuttgart face a high increase in population over the last years. Also some smaller university towns face this problem (Erlangen, Freiburg, Münster). Most refugees moved so far to areas where they already know other people of their home country. This is mostly the case in the big cities that already face housing problems. Deschermeier et al (2016, p. 13) calculate for each of these cities the required housings for the two scenario. The effect of the recent policy changes regarding residence requirements (Wohnauflage see Chapter 1) cannot yet be observed.

## Educational costs (language, culture, integration)

There are no studies that calculate the integration costs of general family reunification or of subgroups, such as family reunification to nationals or refugees. Instead, there are some estimates of educational costs for the general group of refugees. Following IW Köln (see Spiegel online 2016), Germany will spend around 5 billion euros on language and integration courses in 2016. Currently there is a debate in Germany regarding the extent to which the federal level supports the Länder and municipalities with these costs.

## Costs for service production in public sector (day care, health, school)

Due to the fact that there are no studies that focus particularly on family reunification, the following will again rely on the estimates for all refugees.

**Day care**

In 2013 the costs for child day care was 23,012,955 euros (Hummel & Thöne 2016, p. 21). In 2013, 3,352,833 children were supervised in day care centres. This means there are yearly costs of 6,864 euros per child. Following Hummel & Thöne, by the end of 2014, 14% of asylum seekers were below the age of seven. Assuming that there are yearly 800,000 refugees and the percentage of young children remains constant, there will be almost 112,700 refugee children per year. In the very hypothetical case that all of these children draw on day care services, which according to the study would be a great advantage for integration, there would be yearly costs of 773.4 million euros.

**Schooling**

Generally, it should be noted that schooling costs are short term costs that lay the foundation for successful integration into the labour market, which will in turn be beneficial for the state budget. Schooling and vocational training in 2013 generated costs of around 60.4 billion euros (Hummel & Thöne 2016, p 21). There were 8,420,111 students in the same year in general schooling and 2,530,586 students in vocational training. This means that the costs per student per year were 5,534 euros. By the end of 2014 around 24% of asylum seekers were aged between seven and 21 years. Assuming a constant age structure, among 800,000 refugees per year, there would be 193,000 refugees in an education relevant age. Hummel & Thöne (2016) calculate that in case all of these refugees would enrol in schooling, costs of around 1.07 billion euros would emerge.

A different calculation by WDR (2015) calculates that almost 20% of refugees are in an age where schooling is compulsorily. The study reports the calculations of economist Woessmann of the ifo-Institut München, who holds that from one million refugees, 174,000 have to go to school. He assumes that schooling costs are up to 7,900 euros per child per year, including special support. This can lead to costs of 1.4 billion euros which represent 2.3% of all expenditures of German schools (general expenditures of around 60 billion).

Beyond pupils, the recent statistics show that of one million refugees, 222,000 are aged between 18 and 24. Fulltime vocational training costs around 7,000 euros per year, leading to 1,6 billion euros per year. This is around 2.7% of the general expenditures (of 60 billion). Additionally, in 2013 the costs for higher education per student were 6,870 euros. By the end of 2014, around 35% of asylum seekers were aged between 18 and 30. This age can be seen as potential age that can be relevant for a university education. Applied to 800,000 refugees per year, this would mean that there are 276,600 potential university students among refugees. So far, it is unknown how many refugees have an educational degree that qualifies them for a studying at a German university. It is also unclear how many aim for a university education. Therefore, Hummel & Thöne (2016) refrain from calculating the potential costs for university studies for refugees. Beside the costs for schools and university, there are public funds in Germany that support families and student with a low income. So far, it is not clear to what extent refugees and their family members will draw on such additional funds.

**Current discussion and pilot projects for schooling**

Generally it has to be kept in mind that even though there is currently a decline in refugees compared to 2015, family reunification might still lead to a growing influx of refugee children into the German education system in the next years (Geis 2016).

Geis (2016) from IW Köln, argues that langue skills will be the key to the successful integration of young refugees. He calculates that until 2017, 3.5 billion euros are required for those refugees who come until 2016 to Germany to successfully integrate them into the German education system. Of this amount, 2 billion shall be spent on early infant education and general schooling. Additional, 1.5 billion shall be spent on vocational training and higher education.

While this spending is likely to lead to long term benefits, in the short-term they constitute considerable additional costs for the Länder, which are responsible for education. In all of the German Länder an established goal is to integrate refugee children as fast as possible into the regular school classes. However, this requires knowledge of German. As a result, the Länder have established special classes of one or two years to prepare foreign children to participate in the regular classes (IWD 2016).

IW Cologne highlights that the so-called welcome classes need to be further developed and further training of teachers is required to prepare them better for teaching of non-German children. So far, there are very different concepts on how these welcoming classes are organized across the Länder.

Several cities and Lander started pilot projects to enhance integration of students (see IWD 2016). For example, schools in Bavaria, Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg Mecklenburg-West Pomerania and Lower Saxony offer refugee children the examination of the *Deutsche Sprachdiplom* (DSD). In case the students pass the test, they receive an internationally recognized diploma of their language skills. The certificate remains valid in case they return to their home countries. The DSD program is financed at the federal level and by the Länder. It shall provide the young refugees with good job prospects, either in Germany, or their home country. Increasingly, German schools also cooperate with enterprises to prepare young refugees for the labour market. For example, in Hamburg, the program *AvM Dual* (Ausbildungsvorbereitung für Migranten) targets teenagers who newly immigrated to Germany and combines schooling with an internship. After several months of schooling, the participants work for two days a week in a local enterprise. Integration supervisors support the teenagers and the enterprises. At the end of the two-year program it is possible to obtain a general vocational certificate. There are also other local programs and initiatives that try to enhance educational integration (see kofa.de/fluechtlinge).

**Health**

Again, there is no data available for family reunification and it can be expected that the costs for family reunification with a German citizen will be the same as general health care costs for German families.

In order to provide an estimate of heath care costs for family reunification to a refugee, the calculation of heath costs for accepted refugees can be used as a reference. Generally, if refugees are integrated into the labour market, they and their families have a health insurance, like German citizens, namely via the employer and an own contribution that is directly withdrawn from the monthly salary. In this case, most people invest more into their healthcare than what they receive back in health benefits.

Recognized refugees, who did not yet find a job receive general social benefits, as German citizens who cannot support themselves (SGB II ALG II). Those beneficiaries receive a general health insurance card and can choose between different providers. All costs are covered (but not long term care insurance). Since January, the federal level pays the general health insurances 90 euros for each beneficiary (beneficiaries of so-called Hartz IV along SGB II) per month. The discrepancies to the actual costs result in higher fees for all other members of the general heath insurances. While the health insurances fear that the influx of refugees might lead to considerable costs, the federal level is not considering increasing its contribution. The main reason is that the general health insurances are social insurances that are obliged to distribute the costs among their members. In this way people with a high earning shall support those with a lower earning (Bohsem 2016).

Several newspapers (e.g. *Frankfurter Rundschau[[27]](#footnote-27))* calculated deficits of several billion euros that would emerge in the budgets of the general health insurances. They assume that the average costs of health care are 180 to 200 euros per month per refugee, which means that a deficit of 100 Euro emerges per month per refugee. Considering the 1 million refugees that arrives in the last year this would indeed lead to high costs. However, so far there are no official insights that validate these calculations. It also needs to be taken into account that only recognized refugees become members of the general health insurance system and only those who do not work will have to rely on benefits. Also the health conditions of the newcomers still remain unclear. Additionally, it is not clear to what extent the health costs for family members will differ compared to refugees. Finally, particularly for health care costs, it is relevant to consider possible opportunity costs in case families cannot reunite. As mentioned before this can lead to higher costs for psychological support (e.g. if refugees have to worry about family members in war areas).

## 5.5 Benefits of family reunification for municipalities and other local/regional units

Family reunification in general can be beneficial for municipalities as it raises their population size. Particularly in those municipalities that face problems due to demographic changes this can be a benefit. However, often in those municipalities with a population shortage, the labour market situation is less favourable.

Regarding refugees, there is currently considerable debate between the federal level, the Länder and the municipalities on which level will handle which of the costs that emerge at least in the short term from integration and social benefits. Accepted refugees who do not work receive general social welfare (SGB II). The costs for these benefits are divided between the municipality/city level and the federal level (see Hummel & Thöne 2016, p 20). The municipalities and cities are according to § 6 Abs. 1 Nr. 2 SGB II responsible for:

* child care, domestic care, psychological help, addiction advice, debt counselling
* accommodation and heating
* initial equipment of the accommodation, home appliances, clothing, initial equipment in case of pregnancy
* benefits for education

The federal employment service is responsible for other basic benefits for those who look for a job such as monetary rewards for the securing of subsistence, integration measures for the labour market and social insurance.

# 6. Other Effects

## 6. 1 Signal effects of the new legislation

The numbers of asylum seekers that reach Germany are declining in the last months, same as in other EU member states. However, this is generally not attributed to new German policies and laws but to the closing of the so-called Balkan route. There is no evidence that the restriction of family reunification for subsidiary protected migrants limits the number of asylum seekers through signalling effects. It is also still too early to evaluate if there are any possible effects of the new integration law.

## 6.2 Security issues

**Border controls**

In May 2016, Germany extended its border controls to the border of Austria. The controls are aimed to prevent that asylum seekers use Germany merely as a transit country. Thus, foreigners without visas are sent back[[28]](#footnote-28). Also the argument to prevent terrorism is used as a justification for extending the border controls.

**Safe countries**

Germany uses the concept of the safe country in its asylum procedure. The concept is introduced in the German Basic law in Art 16a and was a result of the so-called Asylkompromiss of 1992. Currently, all countries of the EU are considered as safe countries. Additionally, Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo are safe countries. Moreover, Ghana and Senegal belong to the list. As discussed in Chapter one, there is currently a debate to include also several North African countries into the list. The concept of the safe country is contested, particularly by migration related NGOs.

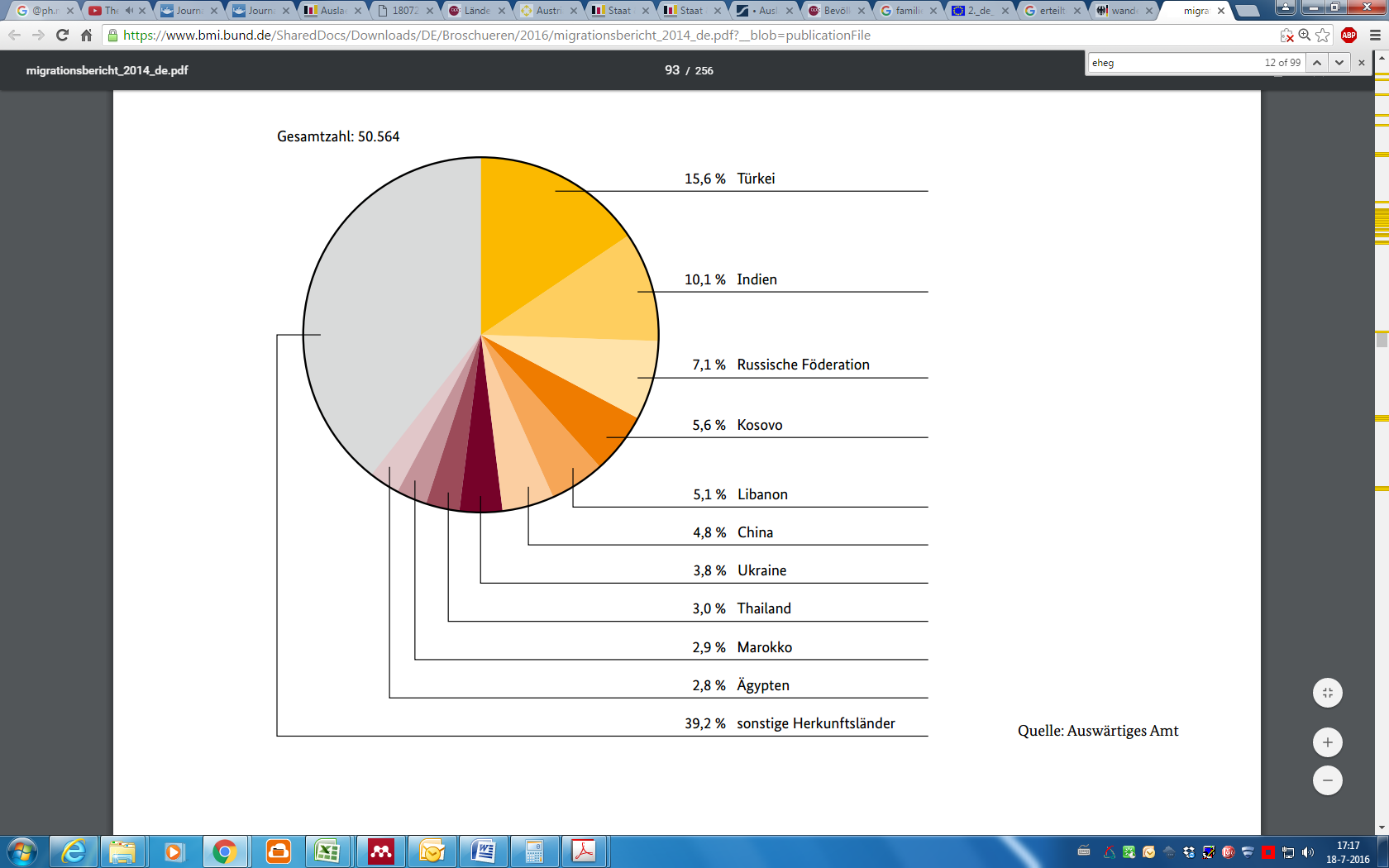
Being an asylum seeker of a safe country means that the conditions during the asylum procedure are restricted (see chapter 1 for restrictions over the last years). Applicants have to live during the whole procedure within a special reception centre, they are not allowed to work, even if they receive a status as *Geduldete*. The time limit to challenge a rejection of the asylum claim is very limited and rejected asylum seekers from safe countries receive an entry ban.

The declaration of the Balkan states as safe had, following the newspaper *die Zeit* (2015b), no significant effect on the number of asylum application from these countries. By contrast, others have interpreted the constant numbers as a success because contrary to other countries, there was also no significant increase of applications from safe countries (*Frankfurter Allgemeine* 2015). Overall, it remains difficult to evaluate the effects because the numbers of applicants vary each month and each year.

## 6.3 Other issues

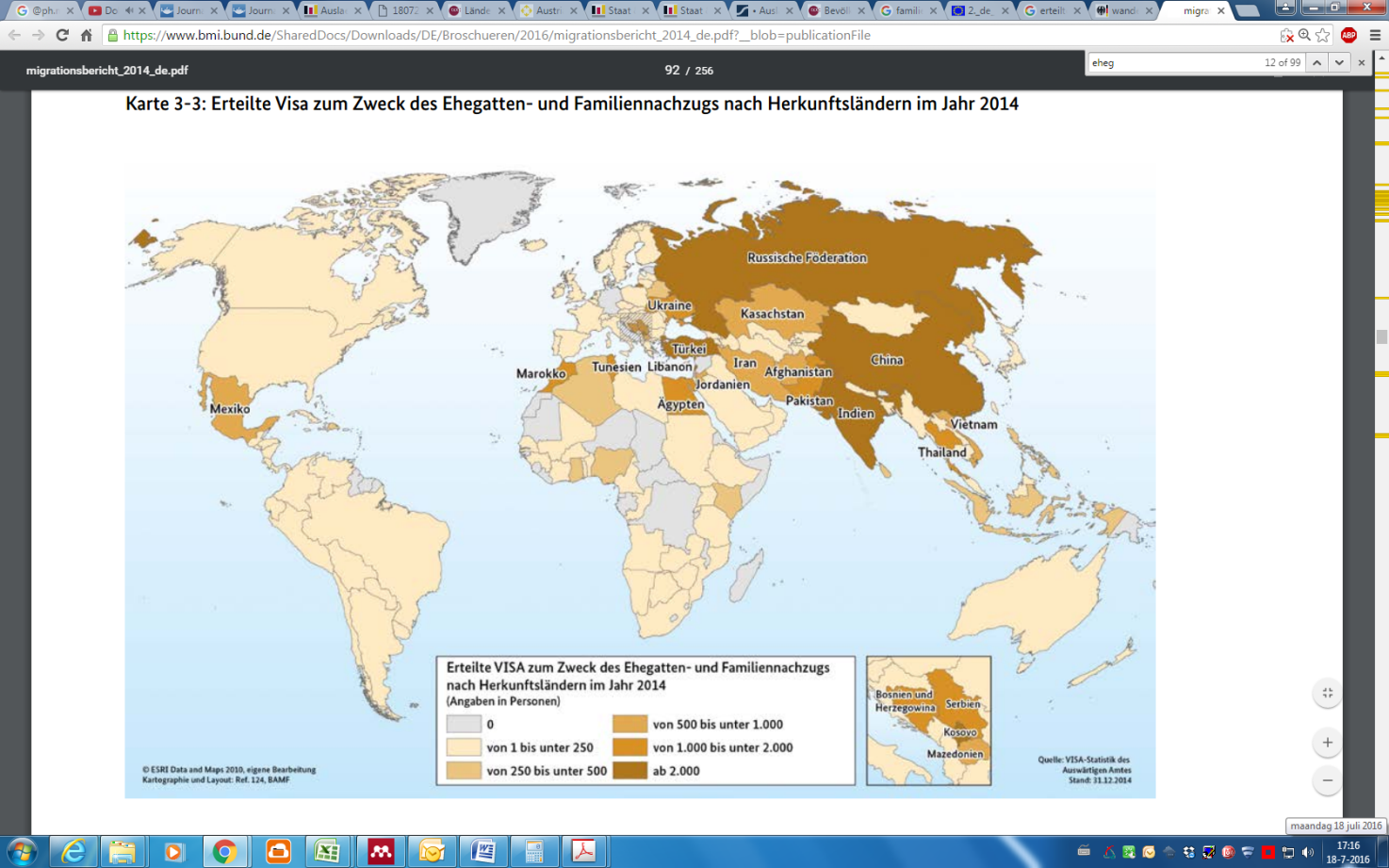
**Appendix**

**Figure 1: Visa for the purpose of family reunification in 2014**



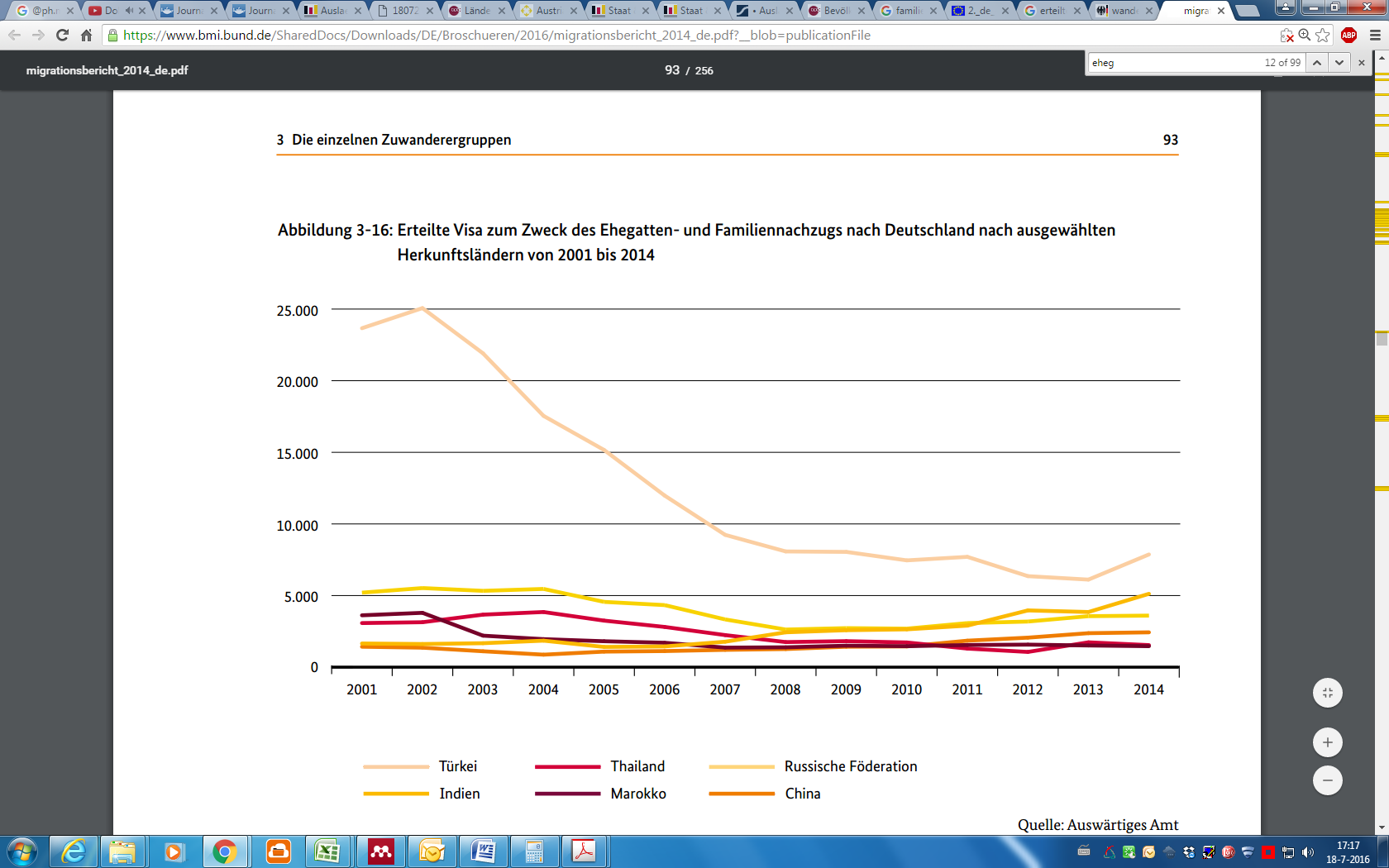
Source: BAMF Migratonsbericht 2014 p. 83

**Figure 2: Visa for the purpose of family migration according to origin in 2014**



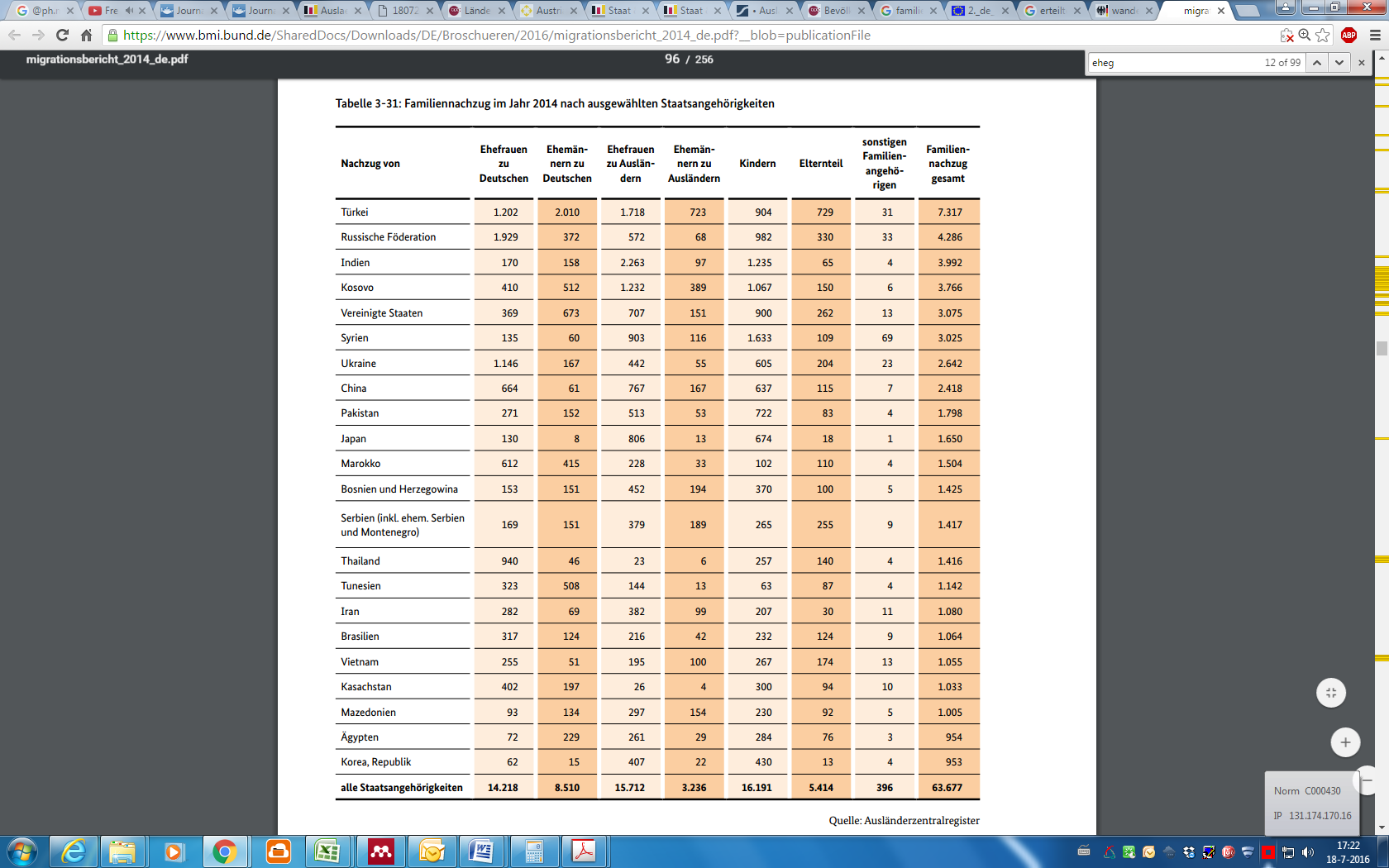
Source: BAMF Migrationsbericht 2014 p. 92

**Figure 3: Visa for the purpose of family reunification according to origin from 1998 to 2014**



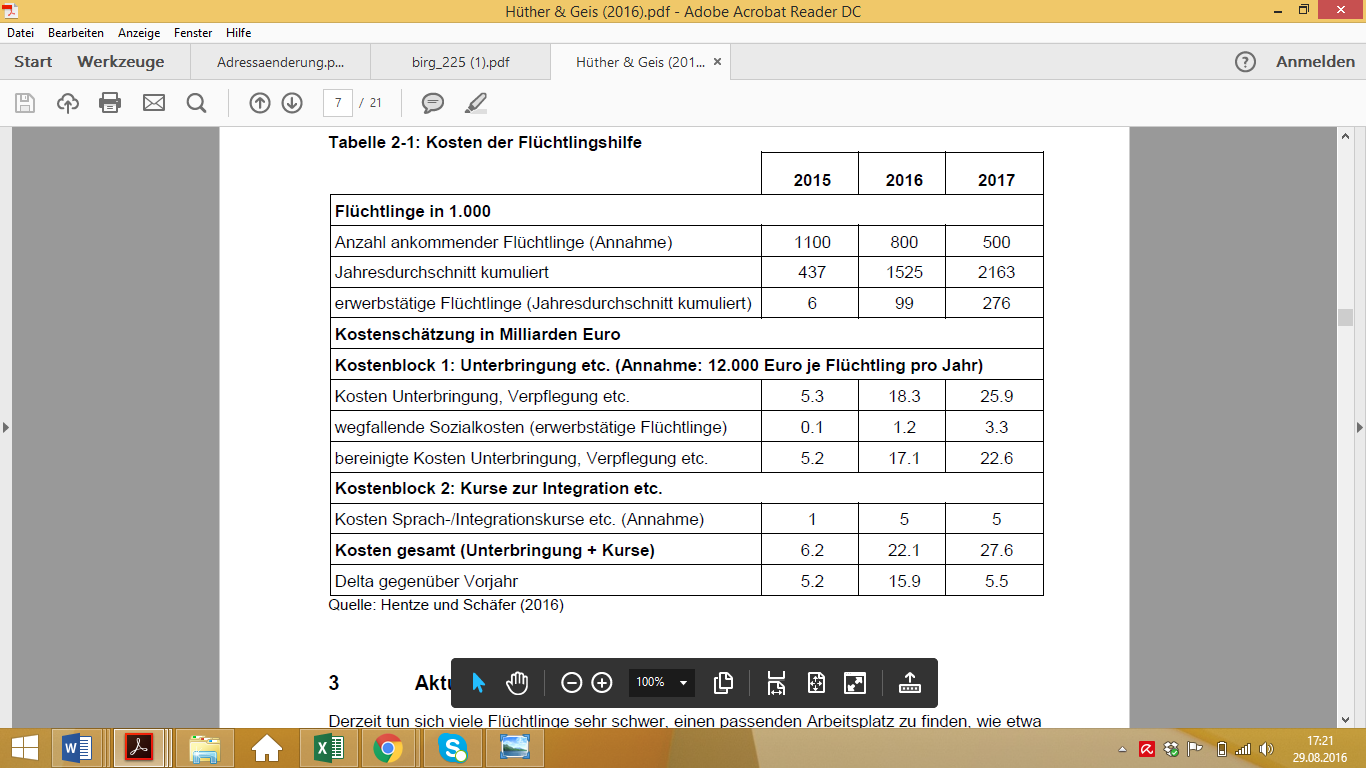
Source: BAMF Migrationsberich 2014 p. 93

**Figure 4: Distribution of family migration in 2014**

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Source: BAMF Migrationsbericht P96

**Table 1: cost calculation for refugee support**

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**Source Hüther & Geis (2016, p. 7)**

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1. the statistics for 2015 are not yet available [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Geduldete are foreigners with a Duldung.* A *Duldung* (toleration) is, according to the definition of the German residency law a temporary stop of deportation of foreigners who are obliged to leave the country (Art 60a AufenthG). *Duldung* is no official residency title, and thus, does not constitute a legal right to stay. Typically the *Duldung*exists if deportation is, due to legal or actual reasons for the time being not possible. Often it concerns rejected asylum seekers (including unaccompanied minors) whose identity is not clear or where the country of origin is not cooperating to receive the foreigners. The *Duldung* only certifies that the foreigner has been registered by the foreign administrations and that the execution of deportation is stopped for a certain period of time. AufenthGh, after 18 months of being *Geduldet* shall the foreigner have a right to a residence status (Art 25.5). However, this right exists only if the stop of the deportation was not caused by the foreigner. Additionally, the general conditions for a residence status according to Art 5.1-2 AufenthG have to be fulfilled (but see the discretion granted in Art 5.3 AufenthG). At the end of 2015,155.103 foreigners had a Dudlung (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015b). The practise that a Duldung is continuously prolonged is called *Kettenduldung* and has been tackled in several legal reforms in the last years. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For parliamentary proceedings see: http://dip.bundestag.de/extrakt/15/019/15019067.html [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For detail see also BpB (2007) and parliamentary proceedings: http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP16/91/9198.html [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. for details see BMI (2008), for parliamentary proceedings see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21.web/bt?rp=http%3A%2F%2Fdipbt.bundestag.de%2Fdip21.web%2FsearchProcedures%2Fsimple_search_list.do%3FselId%3D15641%26method%3Dselect%26offset%3D0%26anzahl%3D20%26sort%3D3%26direction%3Ddesc%26showAllDesc%3Dall> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For details see BpB (2011), Basse et al. 2011, for parliamentary proceedings: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/307/30744.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. For parliamentary proceedings see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/361/36165.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For parliamentary proceedings see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/350/35045.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For parliamentary proceedings see <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/412/41284.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For details see: Tewocht, (2013), for parliamentary proceedings see http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/467/46722.html [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP17/521/52133.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://pdok.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP12/954/95404.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/631/63141.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/620/62000.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/643/64395.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/685/68556.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21.web/bt?rp=http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21.web/searchDocuments/simple_search.do?nummer=446/15%26method=Suchen%26herausgeber=BR%26dokType=drs> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/723/72363.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. For parliamentary proceeding see: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/extrakt/ba/WP18/723/72362.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. http://www.derwesten.de/politik/staedte-weisen-anerkannte-fluechtlinge-aus-nrw-aus-id12148475.html [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/f-a-z-exklusiv-immer-mehr-gerichte-sprechen-syrern-umfaenglichen-schutz-zu-14407066.html [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. https://familyreunion-syria.diplo.de/webportal/desktop/index.html#start [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Integrationskursverordnung, Abrechnungsrichtlinien [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. C-138/13 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Projekte/DE/DasBAMF/Forschung/Migration/arbeitsmarktintegration-einwanderer-familiennachzug.html?nn=1367522 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For example Sinn (2015) comes to a negative balance if all the general public spending, such as defence, infrastructure, legal system, police costs and public administration costs etc. are included in the calculation. Interestingly, Sinn does not mention that the negative balance would also apply to all other German inhabitants when including all these public spending (Ataman 2014). Additionally, Sinn (2015) distributes all public spending and interest burdens equally between Germans and migrants, but part of the public earnings of 97.6 billion Euro are only distributed to the German population. These earnings relate for example, to investment incomes of the state, earnings from wealth transfers (such as transfers from private enterprises, investments subsidies) and other transfers, (such as capital returns from development aid) and earnings of the German federal bank. Following Brücker (2015) it is questionable to include migrants into public spending on subsidies and investments which they finance through their taxes, but to exclude them from the public earnings of such subsidies and investments. Sinn (2015) argues that foreigners did not contribute to state investments because they just entered the country. However, many foreigners lived already for years in Germany and they mostly paid taxes in these years. Sinn (2015) argues that the general public income can only be allocated to the foreign population when they become German citizens. However, as Brücker (2015) argues, this logic would mean that the net contributions of migrants to the public balance in 2012 would increase by 98 billion Euro if they all naturalized, without any economic changes. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. http://www.fr-online.de/flucht-und-zuwanderung/gesundheit-krankenkassen-droht-milliardendefizit,24931854,33805548.html [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/grenzkontrollen-191.html [↑](#footnote-ref-28)